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GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT :—

A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.

DEAN OF ELY

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH

together with

THE LAMENTATIONS

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together with

Revised, 1913

THE LAMENTATIONS

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with introduction and notes

by

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PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

PREFATORY NOTE

DURING the 32 years which have elapsed since this volume of the Cambridge Bible was first published much study has been bestowed by English and Continental theologians on the Book of Jeremiah as well as upon the function discharged by the prophets in the development of O.T. religion. The results of that study have made it necessary to include large additions and modifications in the Introductions and Notes. In the Introduction to Jeremiah chs. ii, v, and vi will be found to be altogether new, while chs. iii and iv have received considerable expansion.

A. W. S.

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MAPS :

Syria, Assyria, Armenia, etc.	}	<i>At end</i>
Jerusalem (Ancient)		
„ (Modern)		

“ It is difficult to conceive any situation more painful than that of a great man, condemned to watch the lingering agony of an exhausted country, to tend it during the alternate fits of stupefaction and raving which precede its dissolution, and to see the symptoms of vitality disappear one by one, till nothing is left but coldness, darkness, and corruption.”

LORD MACAULAY.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I.

LIFE AND TIMES OF JEREMIAH.

1. THE public life of Jeremiah embraces a period marked by political and social changes of no ordinary character, and the Book itself displays to us the circumstances and relations of the people of the time to a degree which the writings of none of the other prophets can approach.

2. *Notices of Jeremiah before his call to prophetic office.*

Ch. i. 1 gives us (*a*) his name, (*b*) his parentage, (*c*) his descent, and family dwelling-place.

(*a*) In the Hebrew his name takes the form Yirmĕyāhū, or (shortened) Yirmĕyah. Its meaning has not been reached with any certainty. Conjectures are,

i. that of Gesenius¹, 'whom Jehovah appoints.'

ii. that of the Oxford Hebrew Lexicon (BDB), which is perhaps the most probable, 'Jehovah looseneth' (*sc.* the womb).

The name occurs as that of seven or eight other persons in the O.T., two of whom are mentioned in this Book (xxxv. 3, lii. 1).

(*b*) We are told (ch. i. 1) that Jeremiah was the son of Hil-kiah. The same is the name of the high-priest, who in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and therefore five years subsequently to Jeremiah's call (ch. i. 2), discovered the Book of the

¹ 'Jecit; id est, collocavit, constituit.' He refers it (*Thesaurus*, sub v.) to an Aramaic root, occurring Dan. vii. 9, 'I beheld till the thrones were cast down' (R.V. mg.).

Law in the house of the Lord (2 Kgs xxii. 8). We cannot, however, consider them identical. Had this been so, the fact would have been brought out clearly, and the name was not an uncommon one. Moreover it is plain that Jeremiah was not directly connected with the authorities of the Temple.

(c) Jeremiah was 'of the priests that were in Anathoth' (i. 1), one of the cities which with the lands in their neighbourhood had been assigned to priestly use.

Anathoth¹ is mentioned as a city of the priests in Josh. xxi. 18. Thither Abiathar withdrew, when he was deposed from his office (1 Kgs ii. 26)². The landscape of Anathoth supplied to Jeremiah's imagination its broad framework, the 'hills of Ephraim' (iv. 15, xxxi. 6, 15—20), 'pride of Jordan' (xii. 5, xlix. 19; cp. l. 44), 'bare heights' on either side of Jordan (iii. 2, 21, iv. 11, vii. 29)³. So too the withering effect of its prevalent east winds would naturally suggest to his mind the figure used in iv. 11.

Jeremiah's expression 'a child' (ch. i. 6), though doubtless signifying a sense of incompetence for the work to which he was being summoned, indicates that he was still a young man at the time of his call, as we find him apparently in full vigour of manhood for the space of forty years from that date.

3. *The political condition of neighbouring nations so far as it affected Judah.*

The position of Judah exposed it to attack from Egypt on

¹ Now 'Anata, a town in the tribe of Benjamin, 2½ miles N.E. of Jerusalem. "From its commanding position it has a fine view northward and also eastward over the broken hills of the wilderness, stretching down towards the north end of the Salt Sea....A quarry at 'Anata still supplies building stone to Jerusalem." HDB s.v. *Anathoth*. We may add that there is no reason for connecting Josiah's high-priest with that place.

² Thus Jeremiah may well have been descended through him from Eleazar (not Ithamar, see Art. *Abiathar*, HDB.), son of Aaron. Family tradition would thus have exercised an inspiring influence on his early training.

³ See Findlay, *The Books of the Prophets*, vol. iii. *Jeremiah and his Group*, p. 159.

the one side, from the eastern empire of Nineveh on the other. It was not strong enough to cope alone with either of these, and therefore the problem which it had to solve was, with which it should throw in its lot. Isaiah, whose prophecies terminated in the reign of Hezekiah, had earnestly dissuaded his countrymen from an Egyptian alliance (Is. xxx. 1—7). Sennacherib, king of Assyria, gave similar advice to Hezekiah through his messenger Rabshakeh (Is. xxxvi. 5, 6). The destruction of Sennacherib's army (B.C. 701)¹ secured Judah against the fate which had befallen the Northern kingdom at the hands of Sargon (B.C. 722). The only important expedition made against Palestine during Esarhaddon's reign (B.C. 681—668) was that which resulted in the removal of Manasseh, Hezekiah's son and successor, as a captive to Babylon². Esarhaddon's son Assurbanipal (B.C. 668—626) sent expeditions into Egypt, which he divided into twelve small principalities, thus delivering Judah from all present fear from that quarter. He is thought to have been 'the great and noble Osnappar' (Ezra iv. 10) who brought over various tribes and settled them in the cities of Samaria, but, although Assyrian inscriptions of his time mention that Manasseh paid tribute to him³, yet the Ninevite king would appear to have left Judah undisturbed. Meanwhile Psammetichus I reunited Egypt under his sovereignty, and during his long reign (B.C. 666—610) succeeded in making his country extremely formidable to its Jewish neighbour. In his time Manasseh died, Amon his son followed for two years, and was succeeded (B.C. 639) by his son Josiah, whose reign was marked by an outward reformation of morals and the renewal of religious rites long in abeyance. No small addition to the political dangers in which Judah was involved consisted in a threatened incursion into its territory, probably *c.* B.C. 625, on the part of

¹ This date is now clearly established from Assyrian inscriptions. See HDB, i. 401 *b*.

² Esarhaddon was the only king of Nineveh who had Babylon for one of his residences. This shews the accuracy of the narrative.

³ See Pinches, *The O. T. in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, p. 389.

Scythian hordes¹, a barbarous race swarming southward from the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, N. of the Crimea, after the manner of the Huns and Mongolians in later ages. They simply sought plunder, to be obtained by the most ruthless methods. Terror at their approach seems to have reached its height about the time of Jeremiah's call, with which that event was doubtless closely connected². The dismay, well-grounded as it was, after all was not justified by the event. They advanced as far as Ashkelon, but Psammetichus, against whom their march was directed, purchased by heavy tribute exemption from actual attack, and their route in both going and returning lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the coast. Thus Judah was spared, while Jeremiah's position must have become a very trying one, as his predictions appeared discredited by the event. We should not omit to notice that the existence of these formidable enemies to the power of Assyria had a considerable share in that weakening of the empire which led to its overthrow (B.C. 607), while the alarm also had its effect in quickening Josiah's perception of the need in which his country stood of reformation.

4. *The social condition of Judah at the time of the prophet's call.*

The religious reform of Hezekiah's time had been followed by a terrible reaction in the reign of Manasseh (2 Chr. xxxii. 5 f.). His subsequent repentance (*vv.* 13 f.) seems to have come too late to have much permanent effect upon the ordering of the kingdom, nor was Amon's brief reign productive of improvement. This was the state of affairs when Josiah came to the throne. With good advisers in Ahikam, Hilki'ah, and others, and with a nation probably more than half weary of idolatry and its attendant evils, even before the discovery of the lost Book of the Law, it was an opportunity not to be neglected for an attempt at the revival of religion. And yet the reformation, as in the time of Hezekiah, seems not to have penetrated much below the surface. Dishonesty, open licentiousness, murder, adultery, false swearing—such is the picture that Jeremiah draws (*vii.* 9).

¹ See Herod. i. 103—105.

² See notes on i. 14.

5. *Jeremiah's call and subsequent history.*

Apparently Jeremiah, so far as human means went, was prepared for his work, not by any formal training in the schools of the prophets, but by the instruction and associations which he would have in Anathoth. In particular the discovery of the Book of the Law by Hilkiah, which took place a few years after Jeremiah's call, doubtless made much stir at his native town, as we know that it did in Jerusalem, including, as it must have done, those graphic pictures which stand in Deut. xxviii. of the punishments which were to follow neglect of God and lapse into idolatry. For a discussion of Jeremiah's attitude towards the newly discovered Law book, see notes on ch. viii. 8 and ch. xi. Meanwhile we may notice that that Book made upon him a profound impression, of which we see the fruit in the references to and quotations from it which abound in his prophecies¹. The need of contending with the prevalent apostasy, together with a realisation of the grave external dangers we have noted, helped to render him responsive to the commission which had been already imposed upon him.

6. The actual *call* had come to him in a form evidently altogether unlooked for. It did not present itself in the shape of a vision of the Divine Majesty as to Isaiah (ch. vi.), or of the mysterious living creatures and wheels within wheels such as was given to Ezekiel (ch. i.), but without startling symbol or ecstatic trance. He shrinks from its fulfilment, distrusting his own power to take the lead and deal boldly and successfully with the evils of the day. The Lord reassures him, touches his mouth, and sends him forth as His prophet to the nations. The illustrations, by which He strengthens his hands and suggests the burden of his prophecy, we shall consider in their place in ch. i.

7. Jeremiah addresses himself to the impurity and crime which he sees around him. The worship of heathen gods

¹ We assume the correctness of the opinion, now largely adopted, that the document found by Hilkiah was identical with the main part of Deuteronomy. For parallels between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy see p. xxxvi.

and the corruptions to which that worship ministered, were the subjects at once of bitter mourning and of stern rebuke. The restoration of the Temple and celebration of the Passover Jeremiah tells them are of no avail so long as their hearts are as foul as they were before. Nothing short of a complete amendment can avert the calamities threatened in the newly discovered Book (vii. 4—7). Such was Jeremiah's teaching during the eighteen years which lay between his call and the death of Josiah (B.C. 608) at Megiddo¹, when the Egyptian king was attempting to take advantage of the weakness of the Assyrian empire by annexing the neighbouring portion of its territory. The disaster was the subject of bitter national mourning (2 Chr. xxxv. 24 f.; cp. Zech. xii. 10 f.). The conviction was gradually growing upon the prophet that a real reformation was not to be looked for. "The life and rule of this second David [Josiah] was destined to end with a harsh discord. Out of the idyll of his religious reformation and his patriarchal style of government he was dragged into the vortex of the complications of universal history, in which he perished²." There is but little of incident to record during this period. Jeremiah presented himself from time to time "rising early and speaking" (xxv. 3), but it was to no purpose. The men of Anathoth itself sought his life (xi. 21), and his brethren "dealt treacherously" with him (xii. 6). He is sometimes inclined to be silent and leave the world to take its course, seeing that in his own words, uttered probably at a somewhat later date, he was but "a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth" (xv. 10).

8. Jehoahaz (the Shallum of ch. xxii. 11), Josiah's son and successor, reigned but three months. He was the third³ son of Josiah, and probably on account of his personal qualifications was raised to the throne in preference to his elder brother Jehoiaquim. His new name (Jehoahaz = Jehovah hath grasped)

¹ See notes on 2 Kgs xxiii. 28 ff. in C.B.

² Cornill, *Das Buch Jeremia*, Einl. S. xiv.

³ See list in 1 Chr. iii. 15. Of "the firstborn Johanan" mentioned there nothing is known, while Zedekiah, who is there called "third," was in fact younger than Jehoahaz, as we see by comparing dates in 2 Kgs xxiii. 31, 36, xxiv. 18.

was probably intended to serve as a charm or happy omen. If so, it grievously failed of its object. He was presently carried off by Pharaoh-neco to Riblah, while the land was put under tribute (2 Kgs xxiii. 33). Although he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord (*v.* 32), Jeremiah speaks of him, as of his father, with kindness and sorrow (xxii. 10).

9. Jehoiakim was next placed on the throne by the king of Egypt and reigned about eleven years (B.C. 608—597), during which period Jeremiah occupies a most important position. The favour of the court was no longer, as in the days of Josiah, on the side of the godly. Violence, oppression, and exaction of forced labour characterized Jehoiakim's rule. He resolved that luxurious palaces should mark his reign and minister to his comfort. The new king's desire for his own glorification and his neglect of the worship of God are the subject of a striking portion of Jeremiah's writings, viz. ch. xxvi., and also ch. xxii.

10. Jeremiah exasperates priests and false prophets alike by the very truth of the charges which he brings. They accuse him before the princes and people of disloyalty and demand his death; while he replies that the message does not consist of his own words (xxvi. 11, 12). He is declared to be "not worthy to die," in accordance with the precedent adduced of Hezekiah's conduct towards the prophet Micah in a similar case. Ahikam comes to the prophet's rescue, and so obviates a repetition of the crime committed in the case of Uriah the prophet (xxvi. 17—24).

11. During the two years which followed, Jeremiah continued to declare the signs of the times and to maintain, in opposition to those who still advocated alliance with Egypt against Babylon, that the latter kingdom would assuredly prevail. He illustrated his words by the symbols of the moulding and remoulding of the potter's clay, and by the public breaking of an earthen vessel in the valley of Hinnom (chs. xviii. xix.). This excited the wrath of Pashhur, son of Immer (to be distinguished from Pashhur the son of Melchiah of ch. xxi.), who appears to have been like Jeremiah both priest and prophet, but one who prophesied lies in the name of the Lord (xx. 6). At his hands Jeremiah underwent ignominious treatment (xx. 2), including apparently imprisonment for a time.

12. At this period there occurred the decisive victory gained (B.C. 605) by Nebuchadnezzar¹ acting as general for his father, Nabopolassar, over the Egyptian king, Pharaoh-neco, at Carchemish (see on xlv. 2). This was politically the turning point of the age, and the prophet was thenceforth convinced that the Chaldaeans were destined to become the supreme power in Western Asia (see introductory note to ch. xxv.). Nebuchadnezzar advanced into Palestine, driving many of its inhabitants to seek refuge within the walls of Jerusalem. Among these were the Rechabites, from the prophet's interview with whom he pointed a moral for his countrymen (ch. xxxv.). Nabopolassar, joined with Cyaxares the Mede, as leader of the insurrection at Babylon, had just succeeded in overthrowing the ancient empire of Nineveh, of which Assurbanipal, mentioned above (§ 3), was the last monarch. Nebuchadnezzar was in command of the army, and would doubtless have taken more effectual measures for the subjugation of Judah, but for the report of his father's illness, which caused him to return hastily in order to secure his succession to the throne.

13. The Jews failed to profit by the warning. In the course of the year following the withdrawal of Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah sent Baruch his disciple with a Roll to be read in the Temple on a solemn fast day in the ears of all the people (ch. xxxvi.). The substance of it was reported to the king; the Roll was fetched by his order, read before him, and in spite of the intercession of certain of the princes who were present, was burned piece by piece in the fire that was upon the hearth. Whereupon there was written by Baruch at the prophet's dictation another Roll containing in addition to the contents of the former a rebuke for the impious act and further announcements of God's coming vengeance. It would appear from the indignation and dismay with which Jeremiah's words were greeted, that up to that date the Chaldaeans had not actually come to Jerusalem. The time of judgement however at length arrived. Jehoiakim after three years rebelled against Babylon (2 Kgs xxiv. 1), was attacked (Nebuchadnezzar being too much occupied to come in person) by numerous bands of Chaldaeans,

¹ The correct form is Nebuchadrezzar. See note on xxi. 2.

Ammonites, Moabites, and Syrians, the subjects of Babylon (2 Kgs xxiv. 2), and, probably in an engagement with some of these, came to a violent end and a dishonoured burial.

14. Jehoiachin (=Jeconiah, chs. xxiv. 1, xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2, and =Coniah, chs. xxii. 24, 28, xxxvii. 1), son of Jehoiakim, succeeded him at the age of eighteen, and reigned like Jehoahaz but three months (B.C. 597). The prominence given to Nehushta, the queen-mother, in the notices of his reign (xiii. 18, xxii. 26, xxix. 2) indicates that her influence was predominant. At the end of the time, the city being besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, he yielded himself up. The king himself, the people of the land, except the poorest, the treasures of the Temple and of the king's house, were taken to Babylon, where Jehoiachin was detained in prison for thirty-six years, till Evil-merodach, son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar, released him (lii. 31). Of Jeremiah's prophecies undoubtedly belonging to this reign we have but a few sentences (xxii. 24—30).

15. Zedekiah (B.C. 597—586), who received this name¹ in place of Mattaniah from Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kgs xxiv. 17), was well-meaning, but weak, yielding now to the suggestions of the prophet, now to those of the princes, who advocated resistance single-handed or in alliance with Egypt. To this time belongs the symbol of the good and evil figs (ch. xxiv., where see notes), also ch. xxix., containing his letter of advice to the exiles, to submit to their captivity and await restoration to their land.

16. At the beginning of the ninth year of Zedekiah a Chaldaean army approached Jerusalem. The wealthiest of the people, who had taken advantage of the prevailing distress to make slaves of their brethren, consented under this pressure to release them in accordance with the law. But on the departure of the besieging army to meet that of Pharaoh Hophra, which was thought to be aiming at raising the siege, the princes withdrew this boon from those lately manumitted. Jeremiah denounced in the strongest terms the act and those concerned in it, including the king (xxxiv. 17—22). The prophet had several years previously appeared in the streets with a yoke upon his neck to symbolize the impending servitude of the nation; and when Hananiah,

¹ Meaning Jehovah is righteousness, or, Righteousness of Jehovah.

who prophesied deliverance, had broken the yoke, he received the sentence of speedy death at the mouth of Jeremiah, because he had "spoken rebellion against the Lord" (xxviii. 16). Although still predicting the speedy overthrow of Jerusalem, he now also prophesied plainly of the future restoration, and like the Roman, the report of whose having purchased at full value the ground on which Hannibal's army was encamped, carried dismay to that general's heart (Livy, XXVI. 11), he gave practical proof of his belief in the brighter days in store for his countrymen¹ (xxxii. 9 ff.). Jeremiah's attempt during the temporary absence of the Chaldaeans to go forth to Anathoth² gave his enemies the opportunity they desired to seize and imprison him as a deserter. After "many days" he was delivered by Zedekiah, who gave him liberty and a daily supply of food (xxxvii. 21). The captains, however, again seized him, Zedekiah shewing once more his weakness (ch. xxxviii. 5). They let down the prophet into a damp and miry cistern, from which he was rescued by Ebedmelech an Ethiopian eunuch. Finally in the 11th year of Zedekiah the city was sacked, the Temple was burnt, and he and his attendants were taken prisoners while in the act of flight. Zedekiah was taken to Riblah on the northern frontier of Palestine, his sons were slain in his presence, and his eyes being then put out, he was immured in a dungeon.

17. Jeremiah, having been recognised among the prisoners of war at Ramah a village about five miles from Jerusalem, is offered his choice of living in an honourable captivity at Babylon or remaining under the new governor of Judah. Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, and grandson of Shaphan, the friend of Hilkiyah the high-priest, was doubtless marked out for this post, as being a supporter of Jeremiah's policy of non-resistance. Within two months, however, Gedaliah was murdered by Ishmael a prince of the blood royal. Many were slain. Jeremiah was probably among the prisoners who while being carried off by Ishmael

¹ His purchase of a portion of a field for seventeen shekels (about £2. 6s. 6d. but representing a much larger amount according to the present value of money) shews that Jeremiah could not even then have been in needy circumstances.

² See on ch. xxxvii. 12.

were rescued by Johanan. This last was one of those warlike captains who had sprung up during the later years of the kingdom. The prophet in vain warned the people against going down into Egypt, and foretold the want and misery which would ensue, if they disobeyed. The expectation of security from war and famine (xlii. 14) prevailed; they forced Jeremiah to accompany them to Tahpanhes (*Tell Dafneh*), a town near the eastern border of Lower Egypt. They looked upon him, we may suppose, as a man who, through his ability to interpret the Divine will, might be a convenient person to have at hand for advice or aid. It is from that country that we obtain the last certain notices of his life. He declares that Nebuchadnezzar's throne shall be set up there at the entry of Pharaoh's house (xliii. 10), and (xliv.) makes a dying protest against the idolatry of his countrymen, and their wanton worship of "the queen of heaven¹." We have no notice in Scripture of his death.

For traditions, etc., concerning Jeremiah and for the prophet considered as a type of Christ, see Appendix.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGIOUS TEACHING OF THE BOOK.

I. THERE is an element common to all the prophetic teaching of the Old Testament, viz. the conception of a unique relation existing between Jehovah and His people, and the consequent enforcement of righteous principles of action and of sincerity in life and conduct. The prophets of what one may call the Assyrian period, that of the century preceding the one in which Jeremiah lived—Amos and Hosea in the Northern, Isaiah and Micah in the Southern kingdom—had laid a foundation of this kind, upon which their successors should build.

¹ See on vii. 18. For information as to the circumstances and religious attitude of Jeremiah's countrymen in Egypt a century after his death, see Sayce's *Aramaic Papyri discovered at Assuan*, 1906, or *Der Papyrusfund von Elephantine*, J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1912.

2. The people to whom the prophets addressed their exhortations chose to infer that this unique relationship permitted them to indulge with impunity in various kinds of sin, while the presence of licentious accompaniments of heathen worship formed a strong inducement in the same direction. Thus Jeremiah's hearers argued that a nation like Israel, which enjoyed Jehovah's protection, which possessed a Temple consecrated to His Service, and which discharged the formal obligations of sacrifice and other ceremonial observances, had nothing really to fear from without. God, as being the God of our fathers, they said, is bound by His covenant with them to keep us in security.

3. Such being the relation between prophets and people, we proceed to note Jeremiah's method of applying the general prophetic teaching to the needs of his own day, and to observe the influence of his personality and his consciousness of relationship to God upon his doctrinal utterances.

(a) *Concerning God.* To Jeremiah, as to his predecessors, the God of Israel is supreme. The question has been raised whether the prophet was a 'speculative' or a practical monotheist; in other words, had he completely broken with the conception which had prevailed in his nation up to his day? That conception was that the gods worshipped by Israel's neighbours, such as Milcom, Chemosh, etc., were really existent, and that the relation of Jehovah to these was merely that of a God of immensely superior power, who might be trusted to protect His people within the boundaries of the land¹, but whose omnipresence and claims to universal allegiance were not yet recognised. Whatever answer Jeremiah would have made to such a question, it is plain that he considered the heathen deities as at least *practically* non-existent, and that Jehovah demanded the homage of all the world. The gods of the nations are vanities (ii. 5, viii. 19, xviii. 8, etc.). Jehovah is the Source of life (ii. 13). Everyone severed from Him is brought to shame (xvii. 12 f.²). He is One who tries the reins

¹ For this limitation see David's words in 1 Sam. xxvi. 19 end, and cp. Jud. xi. 24.

² If these two verses be genuine. See notes.

and the heart (see below), this utterance being directed against those who maintained that it was only the outward conduct, and due performance of ritual that mattered (xxiii. 23 f.). And it follows from this that Jehovah is omniscient (*ib.*). As demanding universal obedience He compels all nations to drink the cup of His wrath (xxv. 15 ff.). In fact so far was Jeremiah from believing, as Ahaz *e.g.* had done (2 Chr. xxviii. 23), that the conquests of Assyria and Babylon were due to the superior power of the deities whom they worshipped, that he maintained that the secret of the success attained by those empires was only because they were the instruments employed by Jehovah for the chastisement of His guilty people.

(b) *Concerning the nations.* Owing to the position and circumstances of Judah, it was inevitable that the range of Jeremiah's prophecies should not be confined to his own small State. Moreover, as Israel's God is King of all the earth, it follows that nations from all quarters shall acknowledge His sway (xvi. 19). If the neighbouring peoples will renounce Baal-worship, and substitute Jehovah as their Ruler and Guide, "then shall they be built up in the midst of my people" (xii. 16).

We gather, however, that, before this happy consummation is reached, Jehovah's anger at the violence and cruelty shewn by the nations in the chastisement of His people is to be visited upon them. The cup of God's wrath has to be tasted indeed by Israel, but *a fortiori* by their foes also (see above for references), and in particular by Babylon (xxv. 26 end)¹.

(c) *Concerning sin.* The nation as a whole, rather than its individual members, was in those days considered as the primary object of Jehovah's disciplinary treatment. Accordingly, during Jeremiah's earlier ministry it seems to be mainly the sinfulness of the people collectively that troubles him (ii. 5, 32), although even here we have the element of repentance, as a matter

¹ But see note on the absence from LXX. of the words "the king of Sheshach, etc." The same teaching concerning foreign nations is found in Amos (chs. i., ii.), Is. (xiii.—xxiii.), in Zeph. (iii. 8) and Hab. (ii. 16 f.), both of whom were contemporary with Jeremiah, in Ezek. (xxv.—xxxii.), and in 2 Isaiah (li. 22 f.).

affecting the individual members of the community, introduced in ch. iii. 14. On the whole, that which perplexes the prophet is Israel's desertion of Him who had ever been their Friend and Protector. So God by his mouth demands: "What unrighteousness have your fathers found in me?" (ii. 5). Is it to be believed that, while the nations are loyal to the vain objects of their worship, the subjects of the true God are faithless (ii. 11 ff.)? In Israel's nomadic days she clung to Him as a loving spouse to her husband. But, as a nation, she has long since made light of her marriage vows, and, under the stimulus afforded by the conditions of her agricultural life, been led to unite herself with Baalim, false gods, givers of fertility, and to grasp at the sensual excitements of heathen worship.

But the meditation on a spiritual relationship between Jehovah and the true Israel begat in Jeremiah a gradual realisation of a greater intimacy with God than had been present to the mind of his predecessors. Accordingly, the history of O.T. religion presents Jeremiah to us as the first who is recorded to have had *habitual* recourse to prayer. He brings to God all that troubles and thwarts him, and in a sense discusses the whole with the Almighty (xii. 1, xx. 7 ff.).

In him there comes into prominence the recognition, amid national danger and overthrow, that holiness is a concern for the individual, that "sin and righteousness become matters of the relation of the personal mind to God¹."

Jeremiah was thus led to make his special contribution to the doctrine of sin. His thought penetrated beyond its particular manifestations, in the form of idolatry or otherwise, and recognised that the root of all this evil is in the heart of man, the element which really constitutes his being. The Divine law will not be obeyed until it is written there. This part of the prophet's teaching culminated in the doctrine of the New Covenant (xxx. 31—34, where see notes).

In such teaching then we have the change from collective to

¹ A. B. Davidson, *Theology of the O. T.*, p. 216. We may perhaps see some relation between this and Jeremiah's strong sense of the rights of the individual, as shewn by his language in ch. xxxiv. (as to the treatment received by Hebrew slaves).

individual religion. If God writes His law in the heart, He must deal with men singly. This indicates a marked advance. Jeremiah's predecessors emphasized the great value that lay in the nation's being able to claim that "God is with *us*." He, on the other hand, gazing on his own soul, saw its worth, and declared, virtually for the first time, "God is with *me*." While still emphatically insisting on the thought of the nation as a whole (*e.g.* xxxi. 16, 28, 31—34), his most spiritual thoughts are yet those which deal with the individual soul. The prophet is dismayed as he recognises the possibilities of evil which lurk there, and recoils at the sight (xvii. 9). And so he prays the great Healer to effect a cure (xvii. 14).

We may add that Jeremiah's conception of the necessity of personal union with God, the Fountain of life, had an important share in making preparation for the doctrine of immortality, towards which the devout in pre-Christian times were already feeling their way.

(*d*) *Concerning religious observances.* The attitude of the prophet's hearers has been described as a "light-hearted optimism." They maintained that they need pay no regard to the spirit in which they acted, to the admixture of foreign elements in their worship, or to their immorality in conduct. They refused to believe that the fate which had overtaken Shiloh, once the home of the Ark (1 Sam. i. 3, iii. 3), could ever be that of the Temple. Zion, according to their view, was impregnable, and anyone who, like Jeremiah, maintained the contrary, was only a fanatic. The prophet on his side points out that sacred things, such as the Temple and sacrifices, are of no weight as against character and life. Righteousness alone gives peace and the true sense of God's approval. The moral law must therefore take precedence of the ceremonial.

This principle the prophet applies to the people's reverence for the Ark (iii. 16) and the Tables of the Law (xxx. 31 ff.; cp. xxxii. 40), to the Temple (vii. 4, 10 ff., xi. 15 [xxvi. 6, 9 f., xxvii. 16]), to circumcision (iv. 4, vi. 10 [ix. 26¹]), to sacrifices (vi. 20, vii. 21 f., xiv. 12).

¹ References enclosed in square brackets are to passages whose genuineness there is considerable ground for doubting.

(e) *Concerning Messianic hopes.* "Israel was the people of Yahweh, Yahweh was the God of Israel; the punishment could not last for ever, the sin in course of time was worked off (Is. xl. 2)¹."

Taking then the expression "Messianic hopes" in the widest sense as relating to the prophetic visions of future spiritual as well as material blessings and of restoration to God's favour, we may trace the following features brought out by Jeremiah :

(i) The people shall return from exile, and the exiled Northern tribes ("Ephraim") shall upon repentance be given their share in the blessedness of the future and have rulers ("shepherds") who shall impart to them true knowledge (iii. 11 ff., xxiii. 6—8, xxxi. 2—6, 15—22, 31—34). To such a reinstatement of the undivided nation Jeremiah is bidden to summon Israel and Judah alike (iii. 12 ff., xxiii. 6). We are shewn the homeward journey and the joys of the return (xxx. 8 ff., xxxiii. 10 ff.²). The Exodus deliverance, hitherto unique, shall be forgotten in this new cause for exultation ([xvi. 14 f.], xxiii. 7 f.). No longer shall false rulers ("shepherds") hold sway, such as have troubled them in time past (ii. 8, xxii. 22, xxiii. 1 f.), but those who are set over them shall be their leaders in righteousness, so that there shall be no more dismay nor fear (xxiii. 4).

(ii) The Temple shall be rebuilt, purified now from every defiling element. The city shall even bear the name of the righteous king, both king and city witnessing by their title "Jehovah is our righteousness," that righteousness, with all the blessing which springs from it, is to be the basis on which the national superstructure rests (xxiii. 6 [xxxiii. 14 ff.]).

(iii) Jehovah's love shall be more than ever manifested for His repentant people (xxx. 20).

(iv) The Messianic King shall take the place of the false shepherds who have disgraced the sceptre. The people shall serve David their king (xxx. 9), meaning that the looked for Messiah shall spring from the Davidic line, and that, as ruler of a reunited people, he shall renew the glories which were

¹ S. A. Cook in *Journal of Theological Studies*, xiii. 86.

² See, however, notes discussing the genuineness of these passages.

associated with the last days of the undivided nation. Moreover, the Messiah shall have a priestly character, possessing the privilege of a special approach to God (xxx. 21). "If his picture of the Messianic king and his kingdom is less magnificent than Isaiah's, the true glory of that rule comes into fuller prominence in proportion as the outward splendour falls away; and we make a long step forwards to the idea of that spiritual kingdom which was to be the true fulfilment of the hopes of Israel¹."

(v) The Ark itself shall cease to be the cherished symbol of Israel's perpetual covenant. It shall be utterly overshadowed by Jehovah's presence in the Holy City. No expression could indicate more forcibly the directness of intercourse with God to be granted to the restored nation (iii. 16 f.).

(vi) The New Covenant (xxxi. 31 f.), like the former, the gift of God, shall, unlike the old Covenant, be permanent and secure. The sins of the nation have rendered the former one inoperative. Jehovah will in the new provide against the risk of such failure. What He desires His people to be, that He will make them to be; for He will put His law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

4. It is very possible that Jeremiah may at first have had hopes that the reform under Josiah, though lacking much in reality and depth, might still mark the dawn of a better day. However this may be, we can see that in the early part of Jehoiakim's reign despair had begun to alternate with the brighter thoughts that continued occasionally to struggle to the surface. The nation's obduracy was proof against the pleading of Jehovah: "we will walk after our own devices, and we will do every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart" (xviii. 12). From the fifth year of Jehoiakim onwards the prophet plainly had come to know that punishment in the shape of national overthrow was inevitable. Any anticipation of permanent reform, as cherished by him in the days of Josiah, had disappeared. The Divine word now had come to be this, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth" (xv. 1, see note there). Nevertheless, as the hope

¹ Kirkpatrick, *The Doctrine of the Prophets*, 3rd ed. p. 323.

of deliverance from temporal disasters fades and finally disappears from the seer's utterances, the prospect of the restoration of Israel, and the other brighter thoughts already referred to, shew themselves from time to time with an apparent abruptness. It is especially noteworthy that the prophet is inspired to utter such prophecies in the darkest days of his nation's history. The promise of restoration, when the time is fulfilled and the chastisement has done its work, is set forth in chs. xxx.—xxxiii., as it had been hinted already in iii. 14 ff., xxiii. 3 ff.

5. In this chapter we have dealt with Jeremiah's work as including the forecast of brighter times. A part, yet only a part, of a prophet's duty, as one sent from God and declaring the Divine will, lay in the direction of prediction. His principal function was not to foretell the future condition of the world, but to alter for the better its existing condition. As has often been pointed out, the word prophet does not itself express the idea of announcing future events. It means, not a foreteller but a forth-teller, one who sets out God's messages, whether as teaching the lessons of the past, or emphasizing the duties of the present, or heralding the Divine purposes in the future. A prophet's declarations in this last respect are modified by the circumstances under which he delivers them and by the conditions of his age. The fulfilment may be in a completeness of form and detail which the prophet was wholly unable to picture to himself. Jeremiah's Messianic hopes have thus attained in the Advent of the Saviour and the founding of the Christian Church a consummation much more glorious than it was granted to him to perceive. We may, however, see under the figures and in the accustomed language of the prophetic age his inspired realisation of a coming time when the chasm which separated God from man should be somehow bridged over, when forgiveness of sins and spiritual religion should take up a prominence which they had never before held. In this connexion it is also suggestive for us who live in the light of the New Testament to note where Jeremiah's vision stops short, while partially revealing to him the Christian dispensation. However clearly certain aspects of the New Covenant appeared

to him with its promise of spiritual gifts of life and power, there is yet no mention of a perfect Sacrifice to take the place of those of the Law. Yet it has been truly said that with him the idea that a man and not a beast is the sin-bearer is struggling into the prophetic consciousness.

CHAPTER III.

JEREMIAH AND OTHER PROPHETS. CHARACTER AND STYLE OF THE BOOK.

1. Jeremiah is personally the most interesting to us of all the prophets, because the various qualities which made up the man are quickly and easily gathered from his own lips. We have just seen that they were no ordinary times in which he lived. The spirit of disobedience and rebellion, which had been so long working in his countrymen, was now past remedy by all common means. Nothing but the nation's total overthrow, at least for a time, could effect a radical cure.

2. It will be well, however, first to take some notice of the connexion or contrast between Jeremiah's teaching and that of earlier or contemporary prophets.

3. Hosea (*c.* B.C. 747—735) has been called "the Jeremiah of the Northern kingdom¹." In style, it is true, the two differ much. Hosea delights in metaphor, and his language contains more in the shape of ornament. In fact, his utterances have been likened to "the dreams of a fever-stricken patient; the images and thoughts press and chase away each other²." Compared with his mode of writing that of Jeremiah is simple and straightforward. But in subject-matter they have much in common. They both look back upon the wilderness days, when Israel was like a wife faithful to her spouse, as being the best period in the history of the nation (Jer. ii. 2 f.; Hos. i.—iii., xiii. 5). As Hosea had rebuked the idolatry and moral corruption of the Northern

¹ Stanley, *Lectures on the Jewish Church*, II. 369.

² Cornill, quoted by Ottley, *The Hebrew Prophets*, p. 29.

kingdom in and shortly after the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II, so Jeremiah denounces the same sins in his utterances against Judah. Accordingly, we have descriptions of idolatry as adultery or whoredom (Hos. i. 2, ii. 2 ff.; Jer. ii. 31 ff., iii. 1 ff.), or as a forsaking of the first love of youth (Hos. vi. 4; Jer. ii. 2 ff.). Further parallels in thought are: the relative unimportance of sacrifice as compared with moral qualities (Hos. vi. 6; Jer. vii. 22 f.), condemnation of the people's habit of looking alternately to Egypt and to Assyria for help (Hos. vii. 11; Jer. ii. 18), the sins of the people generally (contrasted with the upper class) as the result of ignorance for which the priesthood is responsible (Hos. iv. 4 ff., v. 1, vi. 9, x. 5; Jer. ii. 8; cp. Ezek. xxxiv.)¹. In a general comparison of the two prophets, however, we see that Hosea "has no conception of the relation of Jehovah to the individual soul apart from the nation, and therefore no presentiment of Jeremiah's profound idea of the new covenant²."

4. Amos, a contemporary of Hosea, but prophesying at a slightly earlier date, handed on to Jeremiah the conception of the Lord of hosts, the Controller of the powers of nature and kingdoms of the world, the moral Ruler and Judge of the nations. Accordingly, it is not surprising to find that Jeremiah was led, as were Amos (see i., ii.) and Isaiah (see xiii.—xxvii.) before him, to declare judgements that were impending over other nations (xlvi.—xlix.). For a parallelism of language in this connexion see the note on xvii. 27.

As compared with Amos and the first Isaiah our prophet is more tender and patient, while yet unflinching and vehement. Moreover, "the transition from Amos and Hosea to Jeremiah resembles in religion that which is marked among the [Greek] philosophers in passing from Plato to the Stoics. As national life decayed and the State religions of classical Greece broke

¹ Other parallels of language and thought with Hosea are as follows: "Cp. Jer. iii. 22 with Hos. xiv. 1, 4; Jer. iv. 3 with x. 12; Jer. v. 30, xviii. 13, xxiii. 14 with vi. 10; Jer. vii. 9 with iv. 2; Jer. ix. 12 with xiv. 9; Jer. xiv. 10 with viii. 13, ix. 9; Jer. xxx. 9 with iii. 5; Jer. xxx. 22 with ii. 23." Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets*, p. 117 (3rd ed.). But see note on the last passage of Jeremiah.

² Cheyne, *Hosea* (C. B.), p. 31.

down, philosophy threw off its political habit and became introspective and ethical ; so with the ruin of the Israelite nationality, as city and monarchy and temple fell under the doom pronounced by prophecy, the life of the individual soul struck deeper root¹."

5. Micah, who prophesied contemporaneously with the first Isaiah², did not support the latter in his vision of speedy deliverance from Assyrian oppression, and thus anticipated Jeremiah's utterances in at least one important particular, when he announced (iii. 12, quoted in Jer. xxvi. 18) that the overthrow of Jerusalem was not to be averted³. In general, both Amos and Micah differ from Jeremiah in their view of the essence of religion. While he holds it to consist in close communion of the individual soul with God, their conception contains much more of the element of externality, and regards religion as consisting to a large extent in conformity to the Divine will, as shewn forth by the outward life.

We may also note that in common with Hosea (see above) and Jeremiah, Micah denounces false prophets and priests (ii. 11, iii. 11). As Micah had a prominent share in bringing about Hezekiah's reforms, so Josiah's reformation followed upon the earliest years of Jeremiah's warnings. So too both prophets cherish brighter hopes both for their own people and for the nations of the world in the future. Israel's punishment shall bring about its restoration (Mic. ii. 13 ; Jer. xxxi.—xxxiii.); the monarchy shall be re-established under an ideal Davidic king (Mic. iv. 7, v. 2 ; Jer. xxx. 9), and the kingdoms of the world shall thereby be brought to accept Jehovah as their God (Mic. iv. 1 f. ; Jer. xii. 16, xvi. 19).

6. The prophets with whom we have hitherto dealt belonged to the eighth century B.C., when Assyria was still the ruling power in the East. After the interval of half a century, during which, under the fierce and heathenish rule of Manasseh

¹ Findlay, *The Books of the Prophets*, Vol. III.; *Jeremiah and his group*, p. 156.

² "In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (Mic. i. 1).

³ Passages like Jer. xv. 1 seem to imply this.

(B.C. 697—642), prophecy seems to have been silent, we reach what we may call the Chaldaean period, in which (c. B.C. 607) Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, fell, and Babylon became mistress of the world. In the latter half of the seventh century B.C. there appeared four preachers of righteousness, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah. Of these Nahum (probably c. B.C. 640) presents a marked contrast to the last named, for, though maintaining God's moral rule in the world and proclaiming Divine vengeance to be exercised on the enemies of his country, he makes no reference to the sins of his own people. Zephaniah's description of the injustice, corruption, and indifference of his time (i. 2—4, 8 ff., iii. 1—7), uttered as it was in Josiah's days (i. 1), points to a date preceding that king's reforms, and so coincides both in the circumstances which called it forth and in its general tone with Jeremiah's prophecies in the earliest years of his ministry. Again, Zephaniah's comprehensive views of history, and his announcement (*a*) of the punishment which "the day of the Lord" shall bring alike on his own countrymen and on the nations in general (iii. 1—6), and (*b*) of the removal of the Divine wrath upon their repentance (iii. 7 ff.) have much in common with Jeremiah's words. Habakkuk, like Nahum, not a preacher but a writer, probably composed his prophecies during the reign of Jehoiakim (B.C. 608—597), and thus was a somewhat younger contemporary of Jeremiah¹. His was a philosophic mind, full of questionings as to the strange dispensations of Providence in making use of cruel and heathen peoples for the chastisement of the chosen nation (i. 12—17). Yet he feels that in the end, though it be far distant, the righteous shall be vindicated and the idolatrous punished (ii. 1—20). As in the case of Nahum, the sin of Israel, so prominent in Jeremiah, scarcely appears as a subject of the prophet's thought. "The Books of Jeremiah and Habakkuk shew conclusively enough how different the reflections were which God's providence in the treatment of His people awoke in the minds of two contemporary prophets²."

¹ But cp. Peake (*Problem of Suffering in the O. T.*, pp. 151 ff.), who places him in the time of the Exile, and later than Ezekiel.

² A. B. Davidson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (C. B.), p. 63.

7. We next proceed to consider Jeremiah's surroundings, the functions which he had to discharge, his character, and style. Glowing appeals, such as had been made by an Isaiah, a Hosea, a Micah in former days, would now have been of no avail. Jeremiah's office was to utter and reiterate the message, though recognising all the while that the sentence of condemnation was passed and would speedily be put into execution.

8. Such a task as this demanded one who, however weak in body, should be a man of rare courage, unterrified by popular clamour or princely disfavour, fixed in resolve, and thoroughly devoted to the ascertained will of God. He needed not natural gifts of oratory. His work was not to persuade, but rather to testify, to express the thoughts of the few remaining pious ones of the nation. The wearing effect of constant failure, the intense pain of seeing his nation advance step by step on the road to its overthrow, the hostility and abuse which it was his daily lot to bear from those whom he sought to warn—these required as a counterpoise a heroic spirit that should not shrink from the encounter, as well as ceaseless devotion to Him whose commission he had borne from the womb¹.

9. And yet he was naturally of a disposition that shrank from public life, and deprecated all possibility of prophesying in God's name². And after he had entered upon his work, his naturally desponding mind would dwell upon the fact that the message was received with lightness of heart, incredulity, and irritation. "I am become a laughing-stock all the day, every one mocketh me³."

10. At times he seems to have well-nigh despaired not only of success but of life itself. "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!...every one of them doth curse me⁴." Immediately afterwards he contrasts the joy in which, inspired no doubt by the promises given him⁵, he had entered upon the prophetic office, with the disheartening reception that awaited him. Such is the bitterness of his sufferings that on one occasion we find him relating his efforts to keep silence. "And if I say I will not

¹ Ch. i. 5.

² Ch. i. 6.

³ Ch. xx. 7.

⁴ Ch. xv. 10.

⁵ Ch. i. 10, 18.

make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then there is in mine heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain¹."

11. Belonging to the orders both of Priest and Prophet, and living at the very time when each had sunk to its lowest state of degradation, he was compelled to submit to the buffeting which they both bestowed upon a man who by his every word and deed was passing sentence upon them. "From the first moment of his call he was alone, amidst a hostile world²." But through it all conscientious devotion to duty maintained its place within his heart. Although not a born ruler of men, he was nevertheless faithful in expostulation and warning, and regardless of personal consequences, "a hero not in attack but in suffering³." The promise that he should be as a brazen wall made at the time of his call⁴ and renewed later⁵ never failed him.

12. Jeremiah has been likened to several characters in profane history—to Cassandra, the Trojan prophetess, whose fate it was never to be believed, though prophesying nothing but the truth; to Phocion, the rival of Demosthenes in the last generation of Athenian greatness, who maintained the unpopular but sound doctrine that, if Athens were to escape worse evils, she must submit peaceably to the growing power of Macedon; to Dante, whose native state, Florence, was in relation to France and the Empire as Palestine was to Egypt and Babylon, while the poet like the prophet could only protest without effect against the ever-growing dangers.

13. As the true and the false prophets were at variance in their predictions both during Jeremiah's life (xxviii. 1—4, 8, 9; cp. Ezek. xiii. 16) and at other times (1 Kgs. xxii. 6), we may here ask what was the criterion by which the people should have discriminated between the one and the other class of persons in their day? And the answer seems to be that it was the nature rather than the truth of the prediction which supplied the immediate test, as the latter could not be the guarantee till time had been allowed for the prediction to be verified. The passage,

¹ Ch. xx. 9.

² Stanley's *Jewish Church*, II. 439.

³ Duhm, *Jeremiah*, *Introd.* p. 12.

⁴ Ch. i. 18.

⁵ Ch. xv. 20.

Jer. xxviii. 8 f., suggests the principle to be followed. The difference of conception between the false and the true prophets as to the nature of God lies at the root of the discrepancy between them. The former viewed Him as simply the national God of Israel, and therefore as bound to take the side of His people and rescue them from all national disaster, the latter as the God who ruled the whole world in righteousness, and therefore must visit upon His people their offences against His moral code (Am. iii. 1 f.). "Any prophetic voice which would reflect on Jehovah's righteousness, or shew respect for persons, would be self-condemned¹." It follows that, when the prophets confined themselves to foretelling disasters to the empires of the world, no resentment was felt by their hearers, but if they added, like Jeremiah, that their own nation should be visited with retribution for sin, they became very unpopular, and were held to be lacking in patriotism, and even courting disaster.

We need not hold that the prophets who opposed themselves to Jeremiah's teaching were in all cases conscious impostors. Some of them may have sincerely convinced themselves that they were right, starting, as we have said, from their view of Jehovah as a purely national Deity, and led by their patriotism, including as it did a powerful religious element, to use language which would flatter the susceptibilities of their hearers (see xiv. 13 ff.). Their religion was to a large extent traditional, giving undue prominence to the ritual side, and ignoring or at least under-estimating the ethical; above all things, insisting that the doctrine of the indestructibility of Jerusalem, as applied by Isaiah in reference to the circumstances of his time, was a principle of permanent application.

14. Jeremiah's style corresponds closely with what we should expect from his character. The following features may be noted.

(a) Absence of ornament. Full of humility as of zeal for God's honour, he naturally was led to the simplest form of words to express the painful images which ever held possession of his thoughts. While his style has a beauty of its own, it has at its best a shade of sadness, and when it rises to fervour, it is the fervour of expostulation or grief.

¹ Buchanan Blake, *How to read the Prophets*, Part I. p. 221.

(b) Frequent repetition. This also is to be expected, inasmuch as the main subject, on which he is charged to deliver himself, is the same throughout. However manifold the images by which he illustrates the thought, however varied the intensity with which he regards it, the sins to be denounced and the penalties foretold are in the main identical.

We give below a list of verses and clauses (a) repeated in more or less identical terms, (b) where the same thought or image is repeated, (c) containing phrases which recur once or oftener. The number of repetitions given might have been much increased, had it not appeared best only to include cases which may fairly be considered to belong to the original text, as harmonizing with their respective contexts and found in the LXX. We may add that some even of those given (*e.g.* ix. 14 and xxiii. 15) would be excluded by critics who attach great weight to metrical considerations. See ch. v.

Expressions not found in books other than Jeremiah are in italics¹.

¹ (a) Verses or clauses repeated in more or less identical terms :

ii. 28*b* and xi. 13*a*; iv. 6 and vi. 1*b*; v. 9, 29 and ix. 9; vii. 16 and xi. 14; vii. 23*a* and xi. 4*b*; ix. 15 and xxiii. 15; ix. 16*b* and xlix. 37*b*; xi. 20 and xx. 12.

(b) Places where the same thought or image is repeated :

Brasen wall, i. 18, xv. 20. *Shepherds* (meaning princes, rulers), ii. 8 (R. V. mg.), x. 21, xxii. 22, xxiii. 1, 2, 4; cp. xlix. 19 (R. V. mg.). Woman in travail, iv. 31, vi. 24, xxii. 23; cp. Is. xiii. 8, xxi. 3, xlii. 14; Hos. xiii. 13; Mic. iv. 9, 10. Rising up early (spoken of God or of prophets), xxv. 3, xxvi. 5, xxxii. 33; cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15.

(c) Phrases which occur once or oftener :

To pluck up and to break down, to build and to plant, i. 10, xviii. 7, 9, xxiv. 6. To receive instruction (or correction), ii. 30, v. 3, xxxv. 13; cp. Zeph. iii. 2, 7; Prov. i. 3, viii. 10, xxiv. 32. Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, iv. 4, xi. 2, xxxv. 13; cp. 2 Kgs xxiii. 2 = 2 Chr. xxxiv. 30; Dan. ix. 7. A great breaking (destruction), iv. 6, vi. 1 (cp. with notes viii. 21, x. 19, xxx. 12, 15, xlviii. 5), xiv. 17, xlviii. 3; cp. Zeph. i. 10. Terror on every side! vi. 25, xx. 10, xlvi. 5, xlix. 29; cp. Ps. xxxi. 13. *Amend your ways and your doings*, vii. 3, 5. This place (of Jerusalem or Judah), vii. 3, 6, 7, 20, xiv. 13, xvi. 2, 3, 9, and elsewhere; cp. 2 Kgs xxii. 16, 17, 19, 20; Hag. ii. 9.

(c) Frequent cases of coincidence in language with earlier prophets, as well as especially with the Book of Deuteronomy¹. It was natural that one daily exposed to so much obloquy for the nature of his predictions should be anxious to shew that what he maintained coincided with the teaching of the older prophets, viz. that idolatry and national crimes entailed national overthrow. The newly-discovered Book of the Law supplied him with many examples of this teaching.

(d) Numerous images used by way of illustration. Here we occasionally notice a peculiar mingling of the image and the thing signified by it. Jeremiah's vehemence and rapidity of thought are so great, that before he has done more than present us with a portion of the figure, he dismisses it, and falls back upon the subject itself. Thus *e.g.* (ch. i. 15) he speaks of the attack of hostile nations upon Jerusalem under the guise of judges sitting at the city gates for judgement. But no sooner has he indicated the simile, than he returns to language not of judgement but of war².

15. The Hebrew of Jeremiah displays a considerable number

The cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, vii. 17, 34, xi. 6. I will be your God, and ye shall be my people (or in the converse order), vii. 23, xi. 4, xxiv. 7, xxxi. 33, xxxii. 38; cp. Ezek. xi. 20, xxxvi. 28, xxxvii. 27. (Refusing) to incline the ear, vii. 24, 26, xi. 8, xxxiv. 14; cp. Is. lv. 3. (Prophets spoken of as God's) servants, vii. 25 (and in five other somewhat doubtful places); cp. in 2 Kgs (all being by the compiler of that Book), ix. 7, xvii. 13, 23, xxi. 10, xxiv. 2; cp. also Am. iii. 7; Zech. i. 6; Ezra ix. 11; Dan. ix. 6, 10. Behold, the days come, etc., vii. 32, ix. 25, xxiii. 5, 7, xxxi. 31, 38, xlviii. 12, xlix. 2; cp. Am. iv. 2, viii. 11, ix. 13; 1 Sam. ii. 31; 2 Kgs xx. 17; Is. xxxix. 6. *The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride*, vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10. *Time (or year) of their visitation*, xi. 23, xxiii. 12, xlv. 21, xlviii. 44; to these we should perhaps add vi. 15 (with LXX.), xlix. 8 (with Vulg.). *The sword, the famine, and the pestilence* (not always in this order), xiv. 12, xxiv. 10, xxxii. 36, xxxiv. 17. A hissing (expressing contempt), xviii. 16, xxv. 9; cp. Mic. vi. 16; 2 Chr. xxix. 8.

¹ See § 16 below.

² A similar characteristic is found chs. iii. 1, vi. 3—5, 27—30, xxii. 6, xxv. 16, where see notes.

of words and grammatical forms, which do not belong to the language in its purer state. For the species of cypher, or secret writing, called Atbash, see on chs. xxv. 26, li. 1.

16. Parallels between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy are as follows :

1. Vain or vanity, in connexion with idolatry, ii. 5, viii. 19, xiv. 22, xvi. 19 and Dt. xxxii. 21.
2. The wilderness...a land of deserts, ii. 6 and Dt. xxxii. 10 a desert land...the waste howling wilderness.
3. Stubbornness of the heart, [iii. 17], vii. 24, ix. 14, [xviii. 12], xxiii. 17 and Dt. xxix. 19.
4. Circumcising the foreskin, iv. 4 and Dt. x. 16.
5. A nation of foreign tongue consuming harvest and cattle, v. 15, 17 and Dt. xxviii. 49, 30 f.
6. Provoking Jehovah to anger, vii. 18 f., viii. 19, [xi. 17, xxv. 7, xxxii. 29, 30, 32] and Dt. iv. 25, xxxi. 29, xxxii. 16, 19.
7. Abandonment of dead bodies to fowls and beasts, vii. 33, xvi. 4 and Dt. xxviii. 26.
8. Curse on the disobedient, xi. 3 and Dt. xi. 26 ff.
9. The iron furnace (spoken of Egypt), xi. 4 and Dt. iv. 20.
10. Gift of a land "flowing with milk and honey," xi. 5 ; cp. Dt. vii. 13.
11. Tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, xv. 4, xxiv. 9 and Dt. xxviii. 25.
12. A spectacle to the nations, [xxii. 8 f. and] Dt. xxix. 24 f.
13. Ye shall have peace (the language of the false prophets), xxiii. 17 ; cp. Dt. xxix. 19.

17. In the tone and subject-matter of certain Psalms we are reminded of Jeremiah. This is notably the case in Pss. xxxi., xxxv., lv., lxix., and lxxix. The parallels existing between his Book and the Psalms, when joined to our knowledge of his disposition and of the circumstances of his life, make it natural that several of them should have been ascribed to him as their author. Although we have no clear evidence for such ascription, we may at any rate point to the most noteworthy instances of similarity: (*a*) in Ps. xxxi. where there are several points of contact (confined, however, to the second (*vv.* 9—18) of the

three sections into which it may be divided): cp. *v.* 10 with Jer. xx. 18, *v.* 12 and Jer. xxii. 28, *v.* 13 and Jer. xx. 10; (*b*) in Ps. xxxv. cp. *v.* 6 and Jer. xxiii. 12, *v.* 12 and Jer. xviii. 20¹; (*c*) in the tone of Ps. lv., where indignation at the treachery of a trusted friend reminds us of the harshness and cruelty shewn to Jeremiah, and of his resentment at Pashhur's treatment of him (ch. xx.): cp. *vv.* 6—8 and Jer. ix. 2, *v.* 13 and Jer. ix. 4 f., *v.* 20 ("such as were at peace with him") and Jer. xx. 10, xxxviii. 22; (*d*) in Ps. lxix., where a stronger case can be made out. Not only does the Psalm in its last verses (33—36) point to the time of the Exile, but the writer's circumstances and his denunciations against his foes are like those of the prophet (see Jer. xi. 18 ff., xii. 1 ff., xv. 10 ff., xviii. 18 ff., xx. 7 ff.). There are also many parallels of language. Such are *v.* 1 ("unto my soul") and Jer. iv. 18, *v.* 5 (appeal to God as omniscient) and Jer. xii. 3, xv. 15, *v.* 7 and Jer. xv. 15, *v.* 9 (intensity of zeal for God's honour) and Jer. xx. 9, *vv.* 10—12 and Jer. iv. 8, vi. 26, *v.* 24 and Jer. x. 25, *v.* 35 ("Zion and...the cities of Judah") and Jer. vii. 17, 34, xi. 6, *vv.* 35, 36 and corresponding passages in Jer. xxx.—xxxiii. The parallels are noteworthy; nevertheless it must be acknowledged that "when we bear in mind how apt Hebrew writers are to borrow expressions from their predecessors, we cannot feel the requisite assurance that these similarities are due to identity of authorship." LOT, p. 382.

18. Jeremiah was deeply emotional, and his style reflects the phases of his thought. Elegy befitted his temperament, and his general tendency to poetic forms of expression, whether in actual metre or not, is very marked. "In sombre realism he has no match among the prophets²." His style has been called diffuse and abounding in stereotyped formulae and repetitions. The force of such criticism is to some extent diminished by the fact that certain parts of the Book as we now have it are to be ascribed (see next chapter) to the authorship of Baruch and

¹ Against the view, however, which would ascribe the Psalm as a whole to Jeremiah, it has been pointed out that "the military figures of *vv.* 1—3, which would not be natural for him, find no parallel in his book" (Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, *ad loc.* C. B.).

² HDB, II. 576.

later supplementers. If we regard the portions of the Book which can be assigned to the prophet himself, we see that his literary merits are by no means insignificant. His style, however much of a contrast it may be with that *e.g.* of Isaiah, is yet truly poetical. "When the word burned within his heart, he must utter it without tarrying till his lips were touched by the Muse of poetry with a living coal from her altar¹."

19. We may here mention that some Jewish scribes, apparently in order to join Jeremiah closely with the Books of Kings on account of its connexion in subject-matter with the last part of the history contained in them, placed it (with Ezekiel) immediately before instead of after Isaiah². This effected their purpose, since in the arrangement of the Hebrew Canon all the Books which in our order stand between 2 Kings and Isaiah are found (but in a different order among themselves) after the Minor Prophets.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTENTS AND ARRANGEMENT.

I. The prophecies of Jeremiah cover, as we have seen, a period of more than forty years. But when we proceed to read the Book in which they and the events which accompanied them are contained, we find that the order of time is repeatedly violated without apparent reason. Prophecies uttered in the reign of Zedekiah occur in the midst of those that relate to Jehoiakim. The Jewish captives carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar are addressed in words of comfort, several chapters earlier than the announcement made to Jehoiakim that that event is imminent, while the prophecies relating to foreign nations (chs. xlvi.—li.), which chiefly form the later portion of the Book, were delivered long before the final overthrow of the city and kingdom.

¹ Peake, *Jeremiah*, I. 49.

² This is the order found in the Talmud of Babylon (*Baba Bathra*, 14 b, 15 a. The explanation is given, viz. "Kings ends in desolation, Jeremiah is all desolation").

2. So far as any order is observable, it is an order not of time but of subject-matter. The following is a summary of the contents of the Book.

- (i) Chs. i.—xlv. Prophecies mainly relating to home events and history of the times.
- (ii) Chs. xlvi.—li. Prophecies relating to foreign nations.
- (iii) Ch. lii. Supplementary and historical.

(i) may be subdivided thus:—

- (a) Chs. i.—xx. Prophecies falling to a large extent between the dates of Jeremiah's call (13th year of Josiah) and the 4th year of Jehoiakim.
- (b) Chs. xxi.—xxv. 14. Prophecies directed at various times against the kings of Judah and against the false prophets.
- (c) Ch. xxv. 15—38. A kind of summary of the fuller predictions against foreign nations which occur chs. xlvi.—li.
- (d) Chs. xxvi.—xxviii. Prophecies concerning the fall of Jerusalem, with historical notices interspersed. These belong to different occasions in Jeremiah's life.
- (e) Ch. xxix. Letter and message to the captives in Babylon.
- (f) Chs. xxx., xxxi. Prophecies mainly of comfort and hope.
- (g) Chs. xxxii.—xlv. History of the two years preceding the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, with prophecies interspersed. Chs. xxxv., xxxvi. break the chronological order here.
- (h) Ch. xlv. A special message to Baruch.

(ii) may be subdivided thus:—

- (a) Ch. xlvi. 1. Superscription.
- (b) Ch. xlvi. 2—28. Against Egypt.
- (c) Ch. xlvii. Against the Philistines.
- (d) Ch. xlviii. Against Moab.
- (e) Ch. xlix. 1—6. Against Ammon.
- (f) Ch. xlix. 7—22. Against Edom.
- (g) Ch. xlix. 23—27. Against Damascus.
- (h) Ch. xlix. 28—33. Against Kedar and Hazor.
- (i) Ch. xlix. 34—39. Against Elam.
- (j) Chs. l., li. Against Babylon.

3. We must now examine the internal evidence which the Book affords for our guidance in solving the problem presented by the conspicuous lack of arrangement. In the case of Jeremiah, to an extent which has no parallel in any other composite Book of the Old Testament, we can trace the growth and point to the successive stages, thus seeing the Book *in the making*. The clue from which to start is given in ch. xxxvi. The battle of Carchemish (B.C. 605) in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign formed a turning point in the history of the times, as demonstrating the powerlessness of the Jews to resist the forces of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire. It was therefore natural that at such a crisis Jeremiah should make a solemn effort to arouse the consciences of king and people. Accordingly he receives a special divine direction to commit to writing all his prophecies "against Israel¹ and against Judah, and against all the nations" from the days of Josiah to the present year of Jehoiakim. At his dictation (xxxvi. 4) Baruch writes them down, and publicly reads the Roll in the Temple. When this Roll was burnt by the king, Baruch wrote another at Jeremiah's dictation, containing the whole of the previous one, while "there were added besides unto them many like words" (v. 32). This therefore gives us the nucleus or *first stage* in the framing of the Book, although the portion which precedes this part of the narrative in its present form, cannot have been wholly contained in the Roll which Baruch then wrote. Ch. xiii. 18 f. evidently belong to Jehoiachin's reign. Chs. xxi. and xxiv. (in the main) were written in the days of Zedekiah, and much else now contained in this part of the Book must on internal evidence be excluded from the Roll. For instance, we need not suppose that it had the utterances (such as those of ii. 4 ff.) concerning the Northern kingdom which we now find in these chapters. On the other hand prophecies concerning foreign nations were doubtless included in it, even though in a much briefer form than those now grouped at the end of the Book. As the Roll was read aloud three times the same day (xxxvi. 10, 15, 21), it was probably not of great length.

We should not, however, be safe in assuming that, even with

¹ See note on "Israel" in xxxvi. 2.

these reservations, the prophecies contained in chs. i.—xxxvi. *exactly* represent Jeremiah's language during this period of his ministry. Modifications either suggested by the course of events or arising from his utterances remaining long in an oral form, make it improbable that we should have the *ipsissima verba* of prophecies delivered over so widely extended a period.

4. As regards the contents then of the first Roll, all that we can say with tolerable certainty is that it began with the utterances of ch. i., followed by chs. ii.—vi., and ended with prophecies against the nations, while the intermediate portion contained a considerable amount of the matter which is now found in the first twenty chapters.

5. The *second stage* or second edition of the Roll was a reproduction and extension of the first, but containing (xxxvi. 32) "many like words" of doom. We have no means of identifying with any certainty the matter thus added; but we may well hold that it included further portions of the prophecies belonging to the same period, and it seems likely that the fiercer denunciations of sin and threats of judgement were added at this time.

Details as to the respective dates of the prophecies contained in this portion of the Book will be discussed in the notes on the text. We need only here remark generally that passages of a Deuteronomic character¹ naturally belong to a period subsequent to the discovery of the Law book (2 Kgs xxii. 8 ff.) rather than to the five years intervening between the prophet's call and that event.

6. In due course materials became available for introduction at the *third stage* in editing. These consisted of later memoirs and of prophecies uttered subsequent to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and written down by the prophet himself or his scribe either at the date of their delivery or after some lapse of time. Ch. i. 3, as an addition to the original title², evidently refers to such a compilation, although even its terms do not embrace that part of the materials which belongs to a period

¹ See above in ch. iii. § 16.

² The phraseology of v. 2 evidently referred at first only to the prophecy immediately connected with Jeremiah's call at that particular point in Josiah's reign.

after the fall of the Southern kingdom. Within the limits of the existing Book we find historical notices and biographical narratives¹ relating to the last years of the kingdom and to the events which followed immediately upon its overthrow. These were evidently composed by some one in sympathy with Jeremiah and familiar with the circumstances of the time, and they are furnished with dates. The introduction both of these and of the interspersed prophecies we naturally ascribe to the editorship of Baruch, as the amanuensis of the Roll and the prophet's trusted friend. Doubtless individual prophecies existed in a separate form for a while and were then collected and combined, perhaps shortly before, or, more likely, soon after Jeremiah's death. While we may safely say that we owe much in this way to Baruch, one or more compilers later than Baruch are suggested by the lack of chronological arrangement, as shewn, *e.g.* by the position of chs. xxxv., xxxvi. This absence of chronological order supports the view that they were inserted at various times.

7. We may notice an interesting and important confirmation of the process by which the contents of the Roll were afterwards supplemented. That confirmation takes the form of certain remarkable differences in language between the parts of the Book which we may presume to have been included in the Roll and the later portions. In the former the prophet speaks in the first person. *The word of the Lord came unto me*, or some equivalent expression, is frequently found. Here we have Jeremiah dictating to his amanuensis. We have indeed a few instances of this formula in later prophecies (chs. xxiv., xxvii., xxviii.), but in subsequent chapters we find that the third person is used, thus suggesting the work of the compiler. There the regular expression is *The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah*. Moreover, from ch. xx. onwards the expression *Jeremiah the prophet* is often found, a designation which is much more natural if coming from Baruch as the scribe, than as applied by the prophet to himself. It suggests therefore the independent action of the former in this portion of the Book, as opposed to

¹ See Conspectus of the constituent elements of the Book, as given below.

the simple taking down from the dictation of his master. "Thus the positive information which we have with reference to the origin of the Book of Jeremiah is remarkably confirmed by internal evidence, and we are able by the help of the internal evidence to supplement that partial information by an exceedingly probable conjecture¹."

8. The Book, however, before being admitted in later days to the Hebrew Canon in the form in which our English Versions present it, evidently came under the hand of editors who here and there modified or added to its contents, thus forming a *fourth stage*, which may well have been spread over a series of years. Such additions were no doubt in many cases brought about by the posthumous honour bestowed upon Jeremiah by succeeding generations, as indicated by the traditions which grew up around his name². They were considered by their authors either to be genuine prophecies not hitherto incorporated in the Book, or at any rate to express Jeremiah's teaching. The chief example of this latter is found in chs. l, li. (the prophecy against Babylon)³. On the other hand passages are occasionally found which are apparently genuine, but displaced from their proper context⁴.

9. Since the first edition of this Commentary appeared (in 1881) much close investigation has been bestowed by English and foreign theologians upon the Book. While some writers owing to various considerations (notably that of metre⁵) attribute only a small portion of the Book to Jeremiah's authorship, others take a much more conservative view. Among these Cornill is conspicuous, and we subjoin in the following Conspectus⁶ his arrangement. While its details may here and there not be quite

¹ Kirkpatrick, *The Divine Library of the O.T.*, pp. 19 f.

² See Appendix as to these.

³ See note introductory to ch. l.

⁴ *E.g.* ii. 14—17, where see notes. For other instances see the Conspectus given below.

⁵ See next chapter.

⁶ Taken from his *Book of Jeremiah in Hebrew* (Eng. trans. of notes), 1895. See his p. 79.

convincing, its classification is no doubt largely to be accepted, and it illustrates the general account which we have here given of the origin of the Book.

CONSPECTUS OF THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF THE BOOK.

1. Discourses delivered during the first 23 years of ministry (B.C. 626—604), i. 2, 4—19, ii. 1—13, 18—37, iii. 1—5, 19—25, iv. 3—9, 11—31, v. 1—19, 23—31, vi. 1—30, iii. 6—16, xi., xii. 1—3, 5, 6, xviii., vii., (viii.), ix. 1—21, x. 17—24, xxv. 1—3, 7—11, 13*a*, 15—29, xvi. 1—12, xvii., xviii. 1—21*a*, 25, 28, 35—44, xlix. 1—33.

2. Discourses delivered in the later years of Jehoiakim, xiv., xv. 1—10, 15—21, xvi. 1—13, 16—18, 21, xvii. 1—4, 14—18, xii. 7—17, xxxv. 1—14, 17—19.

3. Discourses in the reign of Jehoiachin, xiii.

4. Discourses in the reign of Zedekiah, xxiv., xxix. ^{1, 3—15} ~~13—15~~, 21, 22*a*, 31*b*, 32, xlix. 34—39, xxii., xxiii. 1—6, 9—18, 21—40, xxi. 1—10, 13, 14, xx. 14—18, 7—12, xxxii. 1*b*, 2*a*, 6—15, 24—44, xxxiii. 1, 4—13, xxiii. 7, 8 (=xvi. 14, 15).

5. Discourses delivered after the destruction of Jerusalem, xxx. 1—9, 13—21, xxxi. 1, 2—9, 15—34, 38—40, xvi. 13—26.

6. Displaced genuine passages which cannot be assigned to their proper places, ii. 14—17, ix. ~~22, 23, 24, 25~~ ^{22, 23, 24, 25, 26}, xii. 4, xvi. 19, 20, xvii. 5, 11—13.

7. Biographical chapters written after the prophet's death, xix., xx. 1—6, xxvi. 1—19, 24, 20—23, xxxvi., xlv., xxviii. 1*a* transferred to begin xxvii.*a* (deleting from בראשית to יהודה in xxvii. 1*a*), xxvii. 1*b*—6, 8—22, xxviii. ~~26~~ 17, li. 59, 60*a*, 61, 63, 64, xxxiv. 1—7, xxxvii. 5, 3, 6—10, xxxiv. 8—22, xxxvii. 4, 11—21, xxxviii. 1—28*a*, xxxix. 15—18, xxxviii. 28*b*, xxxix. 3, 14, xl. 6—16, xli., xlii., xliii., xlv. 1—28.

8. Biographical chapters written neither by J. nor by the author of the biographical chapters, x. 1—4, 9, 5—8, 10, 12—16, xvii. 19—27, xxxix. 1, 2, 4—12, xl. 1—5, l., li., lii.

9. Later glosses and interpolations, i. 3, iii. 17, 18, iv. 1, 2, 10, v. 20—22, x. 11, 25, xv. 11—14, xvii. 12, xx. 13, xxi. 11, 12, xxiii. 19, 20, xxv. 4—6, 12, 13*b*, 14, 30—38, xxvii. 7, xxix. 2, 16—20, 22*b*, 31*a*, xxx. 10, 11, 22—24, xxxi. 10—14, 35—37, xxxii. 1*b*, 2*b*, 5, 17—23, xxxiii. 2, 3, 11*a*, *b*, 14—26, xxxv. 15, 16, xxxvii. 1, 2, xxxix. 13, xlv. 29, 30, xvi. 27, 28, xviii. 21—24, 26, 27, 29—34, 45—47, li. 60*b*, 62.

10. The question of which we have just treated, how far the Book of Jeremiah, as we now have it, gives us the exact words of the prophet himself, is closely connected with another, which we cannot omit to notice. It is well known that the earliest existing translation of the Old Testament is that made into Greek¹ for the use of the Jews and others, speaking that tongue, who lived at Alexandria in Lower Egypt. For the most part it adheres with tolerable fidelity to the Hebrew as we now possess it. But the Book of Jeremiah presents in places so startling an exception to this rule, that we are bound to ask ourselves which is to be followed.

11. Two questions in fact present themselves: (i) whether the variations are due to the ignorance and capriciousness of the LXX. translators or to their use of a text differing from that which now appears in all Hebrew MSS., and (ii) if the latter be the cause, whether their Hebrew text was better than that adopted by the Massoretes.

As regards (i), Graf² takes the former view, saying, "After the innumerable instances given above of the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the Alexandrian translator, it is altogether impossible to give his new edition—for one can scarcely call it a translation—any critical authority, or to draw from it any conclusion as to the Hebrew text having ever existed in a different form from that in which we have it at present."

This charge of capriciousness, however, does not seem to be securely based, and may safely be set aside. It remains therefore to assume that their translation is a fairly close rendering of the Hebrew text which lay before them, and to ask further which of the two has a better claim to be taken as representing the original.

The two main differences which strike us on comparing the Hebrew and Greek texts are these.

(a) In the LXX., as compared with the Hebrew, there are very few additions but an immense number of trifling omissions.

¹ Commonly called the Septuagint, or LXX., from the number of translators said to have been employed for the purpose by Ptolemy Philadelphus.

² *Einleitung*, S. lvi.

besides some of more importance. On the whole in the LXX. about one eighth part of the text as it stands in the Hebrew is wanting. There is besides a certain amount of deviation affecting the sense.

(b) The position of the prophecies against foreign nations differs in the two. In the LXX. instead of coming near the end of the Book (chs. xli.—li.) they stand after ch. xxv. 13, and therefore before the section of kindred subject-matter which begins ch. xxv. 14. Also their order of sequence among themselves differs. See § 15 below.

12. The best account of the matter seems to be that the Book compiled in the manner set forth above underwent a process of gradual expansion by amplification of the text, *e.g.* by such expressions as “saith Jehovah,” “Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel,” which form a considerable part of the shorter omissions in the LXX., while that process is presented to us at a much earlier stage in the Greek version¹. For the longer omissions in the LXX. as compared with the M.T. in their bearing upon the question of the comparative superiority of the two texts see notes on chs. xxix. 16—20, xxxiii. (introd. notes), xxxix. (introd. notes); also on the last words of ch. xxv. 26.

Looking at the probabilities of the case we may safely suppose that the Hebrew form of the Book was based on MSS. which received their shape from editors living in Babylon or Palestine. We may confidently believe that the prophet's words would be for them a favourite study, and they would thus be induced to expand the texts which they copied, either by actual additions in the body of the work, or by marginal notes which were subsequently inserted in the text. On the other hand, owing to differences of language as well as of surroundings and modes of life, “Egyptian Jews would probably occupy themselves less with the original text than those of Palestine or Babylon, and thus the MSS., even if transcribed, would retain more closely their primitive form. Amplifications of the text and interpolations really reflect the moods of religious life and hope, and this life was fuller in

¹ This is supported by the fact that metrical tests, so far as they go, give considerable support to LXX. readings. See next chapter.

Palestine than in Egypt¹." While these considerations may be adduced as helping materially to account for the briefer form of the LXX. text, it must be acknowledged that real omissions, whether through accident or otherwise, are occasionally to be found².

13. Apart from what we have termed "omissions" in the LXX., there are other reasons accounting for variations from the Hebrew. Such are (i) a desire for smoothness of sound, (ii) attempts to throw light on the meaning by alteration or addition, (iii) national or local feeling, and deference to Egyptian susceptibilities³. Other causes lay in the illegibility of the Heb. MSS. they used, or ignorance of the meaning of a Hebrew word or expression, slips of eye or ear, wrong vocalisation or wrong division of words⁴, errors arising from actual contractions or from what they took to be such, or lastly, the mistaking of one root for another of kindred form.

14. Mr H. St John Thackeray⁵ has brought forward convincing arguments arising from differences in the phraseology used, to shew that "the Greek version of the Book of Jeremiah falls into two nearly equal portions, which have been rendered by different translators, possibly from two separate collections of prophecies." The former of the translators he considers to have been the more competent of the two. The portions of the translation he holds to consist (according to the Greek order of chapters) of chs. i.—xxviii.⁶ and xxix.—li.⁷, while lii. is an appendix and "probably by a third hand."

¹ A. B. Davidson, HDB, II. 575.

² *E.g.* in ii. 7, iii. 1, iv. 11.

³ *E.g.* in ii. 18, where in dealing with the word "Shihor" (the Nile), as coming from a root which in Hebrew means *black* or *muddy*, they avoid its transliteration, and substitute Γῆϖν (identified by Josephus with the Nile, *Ant.* I. i. 3).

⁴ Words were written continuously, and the system of vowel points was as yet non-existent.

⁵ *Journal of Theol. Studies*, IV. 245 ff. See further treatment of the subject in his *Grammar of the O. T. in Greek according to the LXX.*

⁶ Heb. i. 1—xxv. 13, xlix. 34—39, xlv. 2—28, l. 1—46, li. 1—64.

⁷ Heb. xlvii. 1—22, xlix. 1—5, 28—33, 23—27, xlviii. 1—44, xxv.

15. The following Table shews how, as has been said above in § 11 (*b*), the order of succession of the prophecies against foreign nations differs in the two.

<i>Hebrew.</i>	<i>Septuagint.</i>
xlix. 34—39 (Elam).	xxv. 14—18.
xlvi. (Egypt).	xxvi.
l. (Babylon).	xxvii.
li. (Babylon).	xxviii.
xlvi. (Philistines).	xxix. 1—7.
xlix. 7—22 (Edom).	„ 8—23.
„ 1—6 (Ammon).	xxx. 1—5.
„ 28—33 (Kedar and Hazor).	„ 6—11.
„ 23—27 (Damascus).	„ 12—16.
xlvi. (Moab).	xxxi.

Thereupon the LXX. (ch. xxxii., etc.) takes up the Heb. ch. xxv. 15, etc.

CHAPTER V.

THE USE OF METRE BY JEREMIAH.

1. IT may be said in general that the parallel arrangement of verses or clauses corresponds in Oriental poetry to the use of metre among Western nations, and illustrations of the various kinds of parallelism, it need scarcely be said, abound in the Psalms and other poetic literature of the Old Testament. It is, however, now generally accepted by commentators that metrical arrangement is found also in prophetic writings, and in particular that it is a prominent characteristic of the Book of Jeremiah. Duhm in fact goes so far as to say that wherever this arrangement neither is shewn by the existing Hebrew text, nor can be obtained from it by what he considers a reasonable amount

15—38, xxvi. 1—24, xxvii. 2—22, xxviii. 1—17, xxix. 1—32, xxx. 1—24, xxxi. 1—40, xxxii. 1—44, xxxiii. 1—13, xxxiv. 1—22, xxxv. 1—19, xxxvi. 1—32, xxxvii. 1—21, xxxviii. 1—28, xxxix. 1—3, 14—18, xl. 1—16, xli. 1—18, xlii. 1—22, xliii. 1—13, xlv. 1—30, xlv. 1—5.

of emendation, the passage must be rejected as unauthentic. There is a further question, whether an arrangement of verses in strophes, *i.e.* groups of metrical lines, exists in Hebrew poetry, and if so, how far it is present, *e.g.* in Jeremiah. On this point much difference of opinion still exists. See the full discussion in HDB, III. 7 ff.

2. Those who maintain the existence of metre in either the whole or part of Jeremiah's writings are by no means of one mind as to the exact nature of the metre adopted by the prophet. Duhm holds that the rhythm of the *Ḳinah*, or lamentation, is the infallible criterion, and by this test he reduces the genuine portion of the prophecies (apart from Jeremiah's letter in ch. xxix.) to sixty short poems, amounting in all to about 280 verses. He arranges his material in stanzas of four lines, with three or two accented syllables in each line¹. The *Ḳinah*, we may observe, is the rhythm regularly used for Hebrew elegy², and is to be found throughout the greater part of the Book of Lamentations. The distinguishing feature of this measure is that, while in the case of ordinary parallelism of two clauses the two parts of the distich are approximately equal in length and structure, in the *Ḳinah*, on the other hand, the second member is shorter, and, "instead of balancing and reinforcing it, echoes it imperfectly, producing a plaintive, melancholy cadence"³.

3. Cornill's treatment of the question of Jeremiah's metre involves a much less wholesale elimination of passages than that of Duhm. He admits that the prophet wrote in prose as well as in metre, and in the poetical parts he holds that there is more than one metrical arrangement to be found. He acknowledges further that the character of any conclusions, whether reached by himself or others, is at present provisional. According to him⁴ the metrical basis in the Book is the "Oktastich," the eight-lined "Knittelvers," *i.e.* a combination of metrical lines in which each line contains four accented syllables and a variable number of unaccented. Examples given by him

¹ *Das Buch Jeremia, Einl.* S. xii.

² See E. G. King, *Early Religious Poetry of the Hebrews*, pp. 39 ff.

³ Driver on Amos v. 2 (C. B.). See further in LOT, p. 457.

⁴ *Die metrischen Stücke des Buches Jeremia*, S. 9.

are xxiv. 5, 6, xxix. 11, and instances of the "Oktastich" broken into two groups of four each (a "Tetrastich"), i. 10, vii. 29, xiii. 14, xiv. 10.

Giesebrecht¹ holds that groups of lines, each with two, three, or four accented syllables, occur, interspersed with *Ḳinah* groups. He adds abundant illustrations. Sievers², followed by Erbt³, differs much in his metrical theories from the two writers just mentioned.

4. Recognising then, as we cannot fail to do, the poetic colouring of this Book, it may still be held that a large part of the literature remaining to us in Jeremiah's prophecies is written, not in studied rhythm, but in prose of a poetic character naturally expressive of his emotional nature. Those portions of his writings to which we may assign actual metre can be made without much difficulty to follow the arrangement of an eight-lined stanza⁴. In view, however, of the fact that commentators who accept a metrical arrangement in the Book are by no means agreed with regard to details of the measures used, we can scarcely go further than this in ascribing to Jeremiah's writings a metrical framework. Moreover, those emendations of the text which are dependent solely upon metrical considerations must be received with caution, as there was evidently much more elasticity in the Hebrew use of metre than is consistent with Western taste or usage⁵.

CHAPTER VI.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Such commentaries as Ewald (1841 and 1868), Graf (1862), Nägelsbach (1868), and Keil (1872) are now somewhat out of date. Among foreign commentators of value there stand out prominently the names of Orelli, Cornill, Duhm, Erbt, and

¹ *Jeremias Metrik*, S. iv. ² *Studien zur Hebräischen Metrik*, 1901.

³ See next page.

⁴ So Cornill, *Das Buch Jeremia*, S. xlvi.

⁵ See further in E. G. King, *op. cit.*

Giesebrecht. Of these Cornill¹ is perhaps the most useful to a German-reading student. Orelli's best and latest (3rd) edition (1905) has not been translated, nor have the other three writers. Duhm, in the *Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum A. T.*, 1901, is strongly appreciative of the prophet. On the other hand, the amount of emendation and omission which he carries out to support his theory of the metrical character of Jeremiah's writings, is arbitrary and extravagant. Erbt (*J. u. seine Zeit*, 1902) presents a very useful treatment from the historical, exegetical, critical, and metrical points of view. Giesebrecht, besides his contribution to the *Handkommentar zum A. T.*² has made a close study of metres, but without very assured results. In English we have the section on Jeremiah in Kirkpatrick's *Doctrine of the Prophets*³, the articles in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* by A. B. Davidson, and *Encyclopædia Biblica* by N. Schmidt; *Jeremiah, his Life and Times*, by Cheyne (in the "Men of the Bible" series), and the Book as treated by the same writer in *The Pulpit Commentary*, also the volume in the *Expositor's Bible* by C. J. Ball and W. H. Bennett. Specially valuable are Driver's *Book of the Prophet J.*, 1906, and A. S. Peake's *Jeremiah*, Century Bible, 1910—11.

For works dealing specially with the relation between the Hebrew and LXX. texts of the Book we may refer to those of Scholz, *Die massor. Text u. die LXX.-Uebersetzung des Buches J.*, 1875; Workman, *The Text of J.*, 1889, and the present editor, *The Double Text of J.*, 1896.

The following may be added as works including valuable material on the subject in general and on the Book of Jeremiah in particular, Buchanan Blake, *How to read the Prophets*⁴; Findlay, *The Books of the Prophets*, Vol. III. ("Jeremiah and his Group"); Kent, *The Sermons, Epistles, and Apocalypses of Israel's Prophets*.

¹ *Das Buch Jeremia*, 1905. His Heb. text of Jeremiah with notes, the latter translated into English by C. Johnston, 1895, is also valuable.

² *Abtheilung III. Band 2, Theil 1*, 1894 (*Das Buch Jeremia*, 2nd ed. 1907 "fully revised").

³ 3rd ed. 1902.

⁴ Part III. includes Jeremiah.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS VOLUME.

O.T.	Old Testament.
N.T.	New „
MS. (MSS.)	Manuscript(s).
Heb. or MT.	The original Hebrew text, as edited by the Massoretes or Jewish scholars from about the 6th to the 10th century A.D.
LXX. or Sept.	The translation of the Old Testament into Greek; traditionally said to have been made by seventy persons. It was really made gradually, wholly or mostly during the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C.
Aq. Symm. Theod.	Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Translators of the O.T. into Greek in the 2nd cent. A.D.
Vulg.	The Latin translation of the Bible made by St Jerome (latter part of the 4th and beginning of the 5th century A.D.).
Targ.	A paraphrase or free translation in Aramaic, made for the use of those Jews who were no longer familiar with Hebrew. In its present form it dates from about the 5th century A.D.
Syr.	The Syriac translation known as the Peshitto.
Syr. Hex.	The Syro-Hexaplaric Version.
A. V.	The Authorised Version (A.D. 1611).
R. V.	The Revised Version (O. T. A.D. 1885; N. T. 1881).
R. V. mg.	Revised Version, margin.
E. VV.	Used where the English Versions (Authorised and Revised) agree.
C. B.	Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.
Co. Heb.	Cornill, <i>The Book of Jeremiah in Hebrew</i> , with notes (Eng. trans. of latter), 1895.
Co.	Cornill
Dr.	Driver
Du.	Duhm
Gi.	Giesebrecht
Pe.	Peake
LOT	Driver, <i>Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament</i> (8th edn., 1909).
HDB	Hastings' <i>Dictionary of the Bible</i> .
Enc. Bibl.	<i>Encyclopædia Biblica</i> .
J. Th. S.	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> .
c.	(circa) about.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

B.C.

- c. 722. Fall of Samaria.
- c. 697. Accession of Manasseh.
- 639. Accession of Josiah, the next year (638) being counted as his first *whole* year.
- 626. Jeremiah's call.
- 621. The new Law book discovered.
- 610—594. Reign of Pharaoh-necoh, king of Egypt.
- 608. Josiah dies at Megiddo. Jehoahaz reigns three months. Jehoiakim succeeds.
- 607. First (whole) year of Jehoiakim.
- 605. Battle of Carchemish. Defeat of Pharaoh-necoh by Nebuchadnezzar.
- 604. Fourth year of Jehoiakim. Jeremiah's first Roll written.
- 603. The Roll re-written.
- 597. Jehoiachin reigns three months, then carried off to Babylon.
- Zedekiah's accession.
- 596. First (whole) year of Zedekiah.
- 594—589. Reign of Psammetichus, king of Egypt.
- 589—561. Reign of Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt.
- 586. Jerusalem captured and burnt by the Chaldaeans. Jews carried to Babylon.
- 561. Evil-Merodach succeeds to the throne of Babylon, and sets free Jehoiachin from prison.
- 538. Babylon taken by Cyrus.
- 537. Exiles return, under leadership of Zerubbabel.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the 1 priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin : to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah 2 the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of 3

CH. I. 1—3. TITLE.

The Title is a composite one: *v.* 2 probably was intended simply to date the prophet's call, while *v.* 3 was added later to indicate that his activity was continued during subsequent reigns (though some of his utterances were delivered after the breaking up of the kingdom, see *Intr.* i. § 17). The first verse then is the general title of the Book or of some substantial part of it.

1. *Jeremiah*] For the meaning of the name, see *Intr.* ch. i. § 2 (*a*).
the son of Hilkiah] The small number of proper names among the Jews made it necessary to add the father's name for purposes of distinction. Compare the Welsh custom ap-Thomas, ap-Richard, etc. If we were to render it by *Ben-Hilkiah* we should no longer be in danger of connecting the words that follow with Hilkiah rather than with the name of the prophet himself.

Anathoth] See *Intr.* ch. i. § 2 (*c*).

Benjamin] The territory of this tribe was 26 miles in length by 12 in breadth, and was thus about the size of the county of Middlesex. It was bounded on the south by Judah, on the north by Ephraim, and was for the most part hilly, being crossed by deep ravines which, mounting from the Philistine country on the west, descend precipitously into the valley of the Jordan on the east. The tribe of Benjamin is noteworthy as having supplied the first of the Jewish kings, as well as his namesake "Saul, who is also called Paul," the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

2. *in the days of, etc.*] See introductory note.

in the thirteenth year of his reign] *c.* B.C. 626. The period included in these two verses is one of 40 years, viz. the latter part of Josiah's reign = 18 years; that of Jehoahaz = 3 months; that of Jehoiakim = 11 years; that of Jehoiachin = 3 months; that of Zedekiah = 11 years.

Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah; unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

- 4 Now the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
 5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; I
 6 have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said

The omission of the names of Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin is probably due to the shortness of their reigns.

3. *in the fifth month*] See ch. lii. 12 ff. The city had been captured in the preceding month (2 Kgs xxv. 4, 8—10).

4—19. JEREMIAH'S CALL.

The passage will fall into four sections.

- (i) vv. 4—10. The prophet's call and its nature. (ii) vv. 11, 12. The symbol of the almond tree, shewing that Jehovah is wakeful to perform his word. (iii) vv. 13—16. That of the caldron, indicating a threatened invasion of Judah. (iv) vv. 17—19. Words of encouragement.

4—10. THE PROPHET'S CALL AND ITS NATURE.

4. *Now the word, etc.*] This preface to the Book forms at once Jeremiah's plea and his support, the credentials of his mission to which he might refer the people when hostile and himself in seasons of despondency. We have in this section the declaration of God's purpose concerning him (v. 5); Jeremiah's protest (v. 6); God's reply (vv. 7, 8); the act of divine consecration (v. 9); the nature of the charge itself (v. 10).

5. *I knew thee*] meaning not mere acquaintance, but choice as a consequence of knowledge. The parallelism of contrast, frequent in the poetical books of the Bible, shews this to be the sense of the word in Ps. i. 6, "The Lord *knoweth* the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish"; cp. Gen. xviii. 19, "For I *have known* him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord"; Am. iii. 2, "You only have I *known* of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities."

before thou camest forth] Cp. Luke i. 15, 35; also Jud. xiii. 5.

I sanctified thee] i.e. consecrated or set apart for My service. See Ex. xiii. 2; Lev. xxvii. 14 ff., and often elsewhere.

unto the nations] See Intr. ii. 3 (b).

6. Jeremiah shews that the prophetic office was not one of his own seeking.

I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: 7 for ¹to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be 8 not afraid because of them: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand, 9 and touched my mouth; and the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth: see, I have 10

¹ Or, *on whatsoever errand*

Ah] Rather, *Alas!* The word in the Hebrew expresses not so much an entreaty that things should be arranged otherwise, as a lament that they are as they are; cp. Josh. vii. 7; 2 Kgs iii. 10. Jeremiah's position is thus different from that of Moses (Exod. iv. 10). The latter pleaded inability, "Oh Lord, I am not eloquent," while the former acquiesces in the appointment, now announced to have been made so long before, deploring only youth and inexperience (cp. Is. vi. 5; Ezek. iii. 15 ff.), and replies to the Almighty in the same spirit as Solomon at the beginning of his reign (1 Kgs iii. 7).

Lord GOD] lit. Lord Yahweh (Jehovah). When the Hebrew word *Adōnai* (Lord), which was ordinarily used in reading as a substitute for Yahweh, immediately (as here) precedes that word, the latter was read as God (*Elōhīm*), and in such cases is printed in E.VV. in capitals.

I cannot speak] meaning, I have not the powers necessary to win a hearing. For the prophet of those days eloquence, natural or acquired, was as necessary as it is for one who would be a popular preacher or prominent statesman now.

I am a child] meaning, a very young man. The length of Jeremiah's ministry shews that he was very youthful at its commencement. So Isaiah must have been still a young man when he began to prophesy.

7. Here again there is brought out the contrast between Moses and Jeremiah. The former had offered one objection after another (Ex. iii. 11, 13, iv. 1, 10, 13), and consequently (iv. 14) "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses." But in Jeremiah's case encouragement alone was needed, and it is given at once in word and then in act.

8. *Be not afraid*] Jeremiah had pleaded his youth, but, as the LORD saw, another cause for his shrinking from the task was his natural timidity.

9. *touched*] *caused it to touch*. An outward symbol of the gift of eloquence, which was being then and there bestowed. The same part of the verb (with a causative force) is used in the corresponding passage of Isaiah (vi. 7). On the other hand, in Daniel (x. 16), where the object was merely to restore the power of articulate speech, the verb is "touched," not "caused to touch." The nature of God's dealing with Ezekiel was distinct from either of these (ii. 8).

I have put, etc.] Cp. Deut. xviii. 18.

this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy and to overthrow; to build, and to plant.

- 11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of ¹an
12 almond tree. Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast

¹ Heb. *shaked*.

10. *set thee*] given thee authority to speak as My representative. It is the same word as that rendered "made governor" in xl. 5, 7, and "made overseer" in Gen. xxxix. 4, 5.

over the nations] So Amos (i. 3—ii. 3) had prophesied concerning non-Jewish kingdoms.

to pluck up, etc.] The prophet is said to do in his own person that which he announces as about to be done by God. Cp. xv. 1; Is. vi. 10; Ezek. xliii. 3, where the prophet speaks of the vision that he saw when he "came to destroy the city." So in profane literature we find prophets spoken of as though they had a share in influencing the course of the future, which it was theirs only to predict. Thus Aeneas to the Sibyl:

"And thou, O sacred maid, inspired to see
The event of things in dark futurity,
Give me what heaven has promised to my fate
To conquer and command the Latian state."

Dryden's *Vergil*, vi. 100—103.

The predominant portion of the prophet's task was to consist in rebuke and in threatening; while nevertheless out of the ruins a better and more hopeful state of things should arise for Israel.

11, 12. THE SYMBOL OF THE ALMOND TREE.

It is often supposed that the almond tree and the boiling caldron were seen by the prophet in vision. But it is quite possible that it was an actual almond tree to which Jeremiah's attention was directed. If so, we may see the prophet musing on the moral deadness and neglect which he beheld around him, as illustrated by nature's winter sleep. It is borne in upon him, either at the very time of his call or perhaps subsequently, that in spiritual matters no less surely than in nature this state of things must cease. For him "the sight of the tree is more than a coincidence: Nature is a parable of God's working. Hence he sees in this harbinger of the spring a sign that the hard frost is about to break and new life to spring from the soil." (Pe. *ad loc.*)

11. *I see a rod of an almond tree*] The almond tree in Palestine has been compared to the snowdrop with us, as giving one of the first signs of approaching spring. Dr Tristram (*Nat. Hist. of the Bible*) tells us that at Bethany in the month of January he gathered the blossoms in

well seen: for I ¹watch over my word to perform it. And ¹³the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething caldron; and the face thereof is from the north. Then the ¹⁴LORD said unto me, Out of the north evil ²shall break forth

¹ Heb. *shokéd*.

² Heb. *shall be opened*.

full bloom. They appear before the leaves open, like those of the peach-tree in England. The Hebrew used here (*shâkêd*) is not the ordinary word for an almond tree, but a poetical expression, meaning *that which is awakening*, and referring to the blossoming of this tree as taking place while others are still in their winter sleep. There is a play on the words *shâkêd* and (v. 12) *shôkêd* (watching over). Cp. Am. viii. 1, where the sight of a basket of summer fruit (*kayîtz*) is to the prophet symbolic of the end (*kêtz*) which is coming upon his nation.

12. *I watch over*] The Hebrew word recurs in v. 6, xxxi. 28, xlv. 27. Here the sense is, The Lord is rousing Himself. The period of trial is rapidly approaching its end, and the punishment so long delayed is about to be at last inflicted.

13—16. THE SYMBOL OF THE CALDRON.

13. *a seething caldron*] An ordinary sight in daily life conveys a message to the prophet. In this second symbol the character of the future in store for the nation is more clearly brought out. The word *sîr*, here rendered caldron, denotes a large vessel, as it could be used in preparing pottage for a considerable number (2 Kgs iv. 38). It was also used for washing (Ps. lx. 8). The word rendered "seething" (boiling) is lit. blown, i.e. well heated, and so boiling.

the face thereof is from the north] The expression is an awkward one, and the symbol has been explained in two ways. Either (a) the spectator in the south sees the contents of the caldron ready to boil over in his direction, or, perhaps better (with a slight change in the Hebrew), (b) the caldron is thought of as supported by stones on three of its sides, while the fourth, i.e. the north side, is open and is being fed with fuel from that side. If we accept (a), the people in Judaea will receive the boiling contents, if (b), the point will be that the fuel is supplied from the north and employed with hostile intent against the Jews, now themselves figuring as the contents of the vessel. Whichever view we take, an attack from the north is plainly indicated. For the application, as referring to a threatened invasion of Scythian hordes, see Intr. i. § 3. Later, the danger from the north came to be the Empire of Babylon and the symbol would be equally suggestive. In earlier days, Assyrians had come from the north and carried the ten tribes captive. It was thus a region whose associations inspired dread.

14. *evil*] *the evil*—the evil which was to be expected, foretold by all the prophets as the result of national sin.

15 upon all the inhabitants of the land. For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of
16 Judah. And I will ¹utter my judgements against them touching all their wickedness; in that they have forsaken

¹ Or, *shall speak with them of my judgements*

shall break forth] shall be opened, shall disclose itself. But it is best by a slight change in the Hebrew to render *shall be blown* (as in v. 13), i.e. kindled.

15. *all the families of the kingdoms]* Probably we should read (with LXX) *all the kingdoms*, "families" in that case being in the first instance an explanatory gloss, afterwards taken into the text.

they shall set every one his throne] The chiefs of the invading army, having captured the city, will take their places to administer justice, and inflict punishment on the guilty. For this assemblage of nations against Jerusalem, cp. Is. xvii. 12 ff. The gate of the city, or rather a large space in its neighbourhood, was reserved free of buildings, and was the ordinary place at which trials were held and sentences declared. Cp. Deut. xvi. 18, xvii. 8; Ruth iv. 1. For the word throne as used to denote the judgement-seat, see Ps. ix. 4, cxxii. 5; Prov. xx. 8. The general sense of the verse is that it is not without reason, or as the blind act of ambitious and more powerful nations, that Jerusalem is to be overthrown. That overthrow will take place as a judicial act, as a consequence of wickedness, and after the case had been duly weighed in the balances.

and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah] As the text now stands, the prophet mingles the two thoughts of a besieging army and of a judicial sentence and its execution. It is in point of fact by the scaling of the walls of Jerusalem and the capture of the other cities of the country that the sentence is to be carried out, and Jeremiah here as elsewhere (see Intr. iii. § 14 (d) and note) breaks off his simile or metaphor with abruptness and takes up anew the literal statement.

16. *I will utter my judgements against them]* lit., **I will speak my judgements with them.** An almost identical phrase in the Hebrew occurs again in this book, when Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah "gave judgement upon Zedekiah," mg. "spake judgements with him" (xxxix. 5); cp. iv. 12.

touching all their wickedness] This is defined in the three clauses that follow, (i) the forsaking of the true God, (ii) the sacrificing to other gods, (iii) the worshipping of images.

me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands. Thou therefore 17 gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day 18 a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but 19 they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

have burned incense] lit. **have caused sacrifices to smoke**. The Hebrew word does not necessarily involve the use of incense. See further on vii. 9.

17—19. WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

17. *Thou therefore gird up thy loins*] obviously metaphorical. Prepare for energetic action or strenuous conflict. The lower part of the flowing Eastern robe was gathered up in preparation for (i) a journey (Ex. xii. 11; 2 Kgs iv. 29, ix. 1), (ii) a race (1 Kgs xviii. 46), (iii) a conflict (Job xxxviii. 3, xl. 7).

be not dismayed, etc.] **be not dismayed** (lit. broken down, shattered) **before them, lest I dismay thee before them**. Be not a coward, lest I leave thee to the consequences of thy cowardice. Quail not, lest I let thee quail. Cp. xvii. 17.

18. *a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls*] Jeremiah was to be fortified by divine strength against the attacks which he would have to confront throughout his prophetic life. The assaults would be severe, and hence the force of the figures under which he is described. Jeremiah would need a pre-eminent degree of strength. Cp. Ezek. iii. 9. The words “and an iron pillar” are probably to be omitted (with LXX), as inconsistent with the idea of a siege. If we retain them, we may explain the sentence as expressing in the strongest manner what is impregnable and cannot be overthrown.

against the kings of Judah] Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

19. *they shall not prevail against thee*] When we compare portions of the subsequent history of Jeremiah, we find that in point of fact the prophet was from time to time at the mercy of his foes. The sense therefore here is *shall not finally prevail*. Before the prophet's death his cause should be vindicated, his predictions verified, and good seed sown. Cp. the nature of the fulfilment of our Saviour's prayer in Luke xxii. 32.

2 1, 2 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I remember ¹for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after me in the wilderness,

¹ Or, *concerning*

Chs. II.—VI.

JEREMIAH'S EARLIEST DISCOURSES, VIZ. FROM THE TIME OF HIS CALL (B.C. 626) TO A DATE SHORTLY AFTER THAT OF JOSIAH'S REFORMS (B.C. 621).

These utterances as a whole describe the condition of things at this period, setting forth the corruption of the nation and the punishment to ensue. As the discourses were not committed to writing till B.C. 604, we can scarcely take them as a *verbatim* report of the prophet's utterances, of which however they no doubt faithfully record the substance with probably some colouring of the original language here and there to adapt them to the state of affairs at the later date. The metrical form which appears in a large part of this Book is well shewn in the Hebrew of these chs. Here vv. 2, 3, 14—22, 25—32 give us good examples of the *Kinah* rhythm (see Intr. ch. v.), while the other vv. yield (with occasional slight changes of the MT.) other forms of metre (vv. 5—8, 23, 24, a triple beat or accented syllable in each half verse; vv. 9—13, 33, 34, 36, 37, a quadruple beat in each half).

The whole may be arranged in sections, thus:

(1) ii. 1—iii. 5 Jehovah's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness; (2) iii. 6—iv. 4 conditional offers of restoration; (3) iv. 5—31 impending national disaster; (4) v. 1—31 the foe is at hand, Jerusalem is ripe for judgement; (5) vi. 1—30 the Doom: these last three sections giving a more definite description of the approaching punishment.

CHS. II. 1—III. 5. JEHOVAH'S FAITHFULNESS AND ISRAEL'S UNFAITHFULNESS.

We may divide as follows.

(1) ii. 1—13 Israel's ingratitude in return for Jehovah's love; (2) vv. 14—30 her sin and obstinacy under punishment; (3) vv. 31—37 her disregard of Jehovah's past favours; (4) iii. 1—5 her faithlessness towards her Divine Spouse.

2. *the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals*] This has been taken as meaning, the kindness and love (*a*) of Israel towards God, or (*b*) of God towards Israel. In favour of (*a*) is urged (i) the sense of the rest of the v., (ii) that the 'kindness' and 'love' spoken of evidently refer to the past, while God's attitude of grace towards Israel is still the same that it has ever been. On the other hand for (*b*) it may be said (i) that the original word (חֶסֶד) is ordinarily used of God's attitude to man (but see Is. lvii. 1; Hos. vi. 4, 6), (ii) that even in the wilderness

in a land that was not sown. Israel *was* holiness unto the ³ LORD, the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall be held guilty; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and ⁴ all the families of the house of Israel: thus saith the ⁵ LORD, What unrighteousness have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? Neither said they, Where is ⁶

Israel was often unfaithful (cp. vii. 25; Ezek. ii. 3, xx. 13 ff.), (iii) that the whole tone of Deut., to which these prophecies (see Intr. iii. § 16) are so closely related in language, indicates God's free choice of Israel and her ingratitude. In this latter case the sense will be (using a bold metaphor), "I have not forgotten my love for my young bride," i.e. Israel's consecration and my promise to defend her. For this metaphorical application of the thought of a marriage union between Jehovah and Israel, cp. Is. liv. 1, 4 ff., lxii. 4 f.

3. *Israel was holiness unto the LORD, the firstfruits of his increase*] Cp. Ex. xix. 6; Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2; cp. xxvi. 18 and Am. iii. 2. There is no moral significance attached to the word holiness here. It means simply setting apart from ordinary uses, dedication to God. Israel is as the most precious part of the harvest, that part which is consecrated as God's portion. The notion was familiar through the yearly custom, prescribed Lev. xxiii. 10—14, that a measure of the firstfruits should be waved by the priest before the Lord, and that none of the harvest should be enjoyed till this rite had been fulfilled. Cp. Ex. xxiii. 19; Deut. xxvi. 2 ff.

all that devour him shall be held guilty] The priest and his family alone were to eat of the firstfruits. No stranger was allowed to partake. If any unhallowed person profaned the firstfruits by taking of them, he bore "the iniquity that bringeth *guilt*." See Lev. xxii. 16 (where the Heb. root is the same as here). Thus the sense is that if unconsecrated (i.e. heathen) nations assail Israel, their fate shall be that of such as eat the firstfruits unlawfully.

4. *all the families of the house of Israel*] addressed not to the ten tribes only, but to the nation as a whole.

5. Has Israel had any excuse for their disloyalty to Me? None. *have walked after vanity*] 'vanity' (lit. a breath) is here used in the same sense as in 1 Kgs xvi. 13. Jehovah and His prophets regarded idols simply as unsubstantial, unreal things. Hence 'vanity' (i.e. idols) expresses their view. So in 1 Cor. viii. 4. Cp. vv. 8, 11, xvi. 19; 1 Sam. xii. 21; Is. xliv. 9 f. Ch. x. 10 contrasts God as "the true God," "the living God"; while the notions of that which is unreal and that which is positively injurious are combined in xvi. 19.

and are become vain] have their characters assimilated to the

the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt; that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought and of ¹the shadow of death, through a land that none passed through, and 7 where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine

¹ Or, *deep darkness*

objects which they serve. Cp. Rom. i. 21 f., they "became vain in their reasonings...they became fools."

6. The prophet brings their thanklessness into bolder relief by depicting in the strongest colours the care lavished upon them of old. Utter forgetfulness is their return for the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the preservation from the various dangers of the wilderness, and the bestowal of Canaan.

pits] one of the difficulties and dangers of travellers consisted in the rifts or clefts which had to be crossed or avoided by a circuitous route.

shadow of death] mg. (better) *deep darkness*. The difference depends on the vowels which we attach to the consonants of the Hebrew word. For its application, as here, to circumstances of peril, cp. Ps. xxiii. 4, xlv. 19. The pathless desert is as bewildering as would be profound darkness.

7. *a plentiful land*] lit. *a land of the Carmel*. The word Carmel properly means a piece of ground fertile and well-cultivated (iv. 26 R.V. mg.), but was commonly used as the actual name of one such spot of Palestine, the only promontory that the sea-board of the country possesses, jutting out into the Mediterranean, and bounding the great plain of Esdraelon.

defiled] with (i) idolatry, (ii) sacrifices of their children; so Ps. cvi. 37. The old inhabitants of Canaan were driven out for their sins (cp. Deut. ix. 4 ff., xviii. 12, etc.). Israel has proved little better. See iii. 2, 9.

mine heritage] Cp. Ex. xv. 17; Ps. lxxix. 1. Elsewhere it is generally Israel itself that goes by this name; e.g. Deut. xxxii. 9. Cp. x. 16; 1 Sam. x. 1; 1 Kgs viii. 51; Ps. xxviii. 9, lxxviii. 71; Is. xix. 25.

8. The wickedness of the people is matched and encouraged by that of the chief men both in Church and State.

For the denunciation of priests and false prophets on the part of Jeremiah, cp. Hosea and Micah (see Intr. iii. §§ 3, 5), Micaiah (in 1 Kgs xxii.) and Isaiah (xxviii. 7). So later Ezekiel (xiii. 1 ff.).

Three classes of persons are spoken of.

(1) (this class is subdivided into two) *the priests*. The duty of the tribe of Levi was not only to serve at the altar, but to handle the law;

heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is 8 the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the ¹rulers also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the 9 LORD, and with your children's children will I plead. For 10 pass over to the isles of Kittim, and see; and send unto

¹ Heb. *shepherds*.

i.e. to direct its administration, whether in accordance with oral or written regulations. Cp. viii. 8 (with note), xviii. 18; Ezek. vii. 26; Mal. ii. 7; also Deut. xvii. 1 ff., xxxiii. 10.

(2) *the rulers* (mg. Heb. *shepherds*), meaning, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, kings or princes. Cp. iii. 15, x. 21, xxiii. 1—4, xxv. 34; 1 Kgs xxii. 17; Ezek. xxxiv. 2. So in Homer the kings are "shepherds of the people."

(3) *the prophets*, whose duty it was to declare the will of God from time to time, and urge upon the people reformation and a religious life. Jeremiah felt most keenly the wickedness of both priest and prophet, since in his own person he represented both orders, and "by a singularly tragical fate he lived precisely at that age at which both of those great institutions seemed to have reached the utmost point of degradation and corruption" (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, II. pp. 439, 440). "He who by each of his callings was naturally led to sympathise with both, was the doomed antagonist of both, victim of one of the strongest of human passions, the hatred of Priests against a Priest who attacks his own order, the hatred of Prophets against a Prophet who ventures to have a voice and a will of his own" (*ibid.*).

said not, Where is the Lord?] i.e. they were indifferent to God's will, and thought of nothing less than consulting Him.

transgressed] better, *rebelled*.

by Baal] lit. *by the Baal*. The singular is used collectively for false gods in general, and is equivalent to the plural, which occurs ii. 23, ix. 13. So Hosea uses the singular collectively in ii. 8, xiii. 1; substituting the plural in ii. 13, 17, xi. 2. The word is thus generic, denoting the local deities worshipped in various districts.

things that do not profit] See on v. 5.

9. *plead*] rather, **contend**, as both A.V. and R.V. rightly render in Is. xlix. 25, l. 8. To the modern ear the word "plead" suggests intercession, entreaty, a sense which the Hebrew verb never bears.

10. *the isles of Kittim*] The Kittim are mentioned as descendants of Javan in Gen. x. 4. Josephus (*Ant.* i. vi. 1) identifies the original seat of the tribe with the town of Citium (Larnaka) in Cyprus. Gradually the name seems to have been extended, so as to include not only the neighbouring islands, but the coastlands of Italy and

Kedar, and consider diligently; and see if there hath been
 11 such a thing. Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which yet
 are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for
 12 that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens,
 at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith

Greece. In Dan. xi. 30 the "ships of K." refer to the Roman expedition to Egypt against Antiochus Epiphanes B.C. 168. The word in 1 Macc. i. 1, viii. 5 means Macedonia.

Kedar] As Kittim represented the parts of the world that lay to the westward of Palestine, so Kedar represented those which lay to the eastward. Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13) and seems from the many subsequent notices of his tribe in the Bible to have been destined to be in his posterity the most distinguished of the twelve brethren, princes, given in the genealogy. They were a pastoral tribe (Is. xlii. 11, lx. 7) and were bowmen (Is. xxi. 17) living on the north-west of Arabia, and extending to the borders of Palestine. In Psalm cxx. 5 they are spoken of as a barbarous tribe, to dwell amongst whom was to be utterly cut off from the worship of the true God. Even they, however, the Lord declares, do not furnish a parallel for the baseness which appertains to the Jews.

11. *a nation*] i.e. a heathen nation.

which yet are no gods] Therefore it need not have occasioned surprise, if their worshippers had at some time deserted them. Heathen nations are loyal to their gods, unreal though they be. For reference to the question whether Jeremiah was a 'speculative,' or only a *practical*, monotheist, see Intr. ii. § 3 (a).

their glory] Jehovah, Whose very nature is glory, makes that glory known to Israel as His chosen people, and gives them a share in it. Cp. Deut. x. 21; also 1 Sam. iv. 21; Ps. cvi. 20.

be horribly afraid] lit. shudder, bristle with horror.

12. *be ye very desolate*] lit. **be ye dry**. The heavens are bid to shrivel up in horror at the behaviour of the people. By a figure common in all poetry nature is called upon to adapt herself, as though a living being, to the complexion of human affairs. By a slight alteration of MT., however, we get (instead of "be ye very desolate") the rendering of LXX, viz. *exceedingly*, as an epithet of the preceding verb. Render therefore, *Shudder exceedingly*. Cp. Ps. l. 4, 6; Is. xliv. 23, xlix. 13.

13. "Jehovah is a fountain of living water, having life in Himself, giving life to all." (Co.) Israel has preferred cisterns, the contents of which, vapid and worthless in themselves, speedily disappear through leakage. For the figure of water as denoting spiritual blessing, cp. Is. xii. 3, xliv. 3. "The perennial spring of water that leaps and flashes as though it were a living thing, breaking ceaselessly forth from a hidden source, is the best image of that higher life bestowed on him to

the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they ¹³ have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn *slave*? why is he ¹⁴ become a prey? The young lions have roared upon him, ¹⁵ and ¹yelled: and they have made his land waste; his cities

¹ Heb. *given out their voice.*

whom God has unveiled his face." Hort, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, p. 99.

two evils] The sin of the heathen is idolatry, whereas this people have in addition renounced the service of the one true God.

cisterns] These were very familiar objects to those whom the prophet addressed. "There are thousands of these ancient cisterns in upper Galilee, where Josephus says there were two hundred and forty cities in his day, and the site of every one was pierced like a honeycomb with them" (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 287).

broken cisterns, that can hold no water] "No comparison could more keenly rebuke the madness of a people who changed their glory for that which doth not profit. The best cisterns, even those in solid rock, are strangely liable to crack...and if by constant care they are made to hold, yet the water collected from clay roofs or from marly soil has the colour of weak soapsuds, the taste of the earth or the stable, is full of worms, and in the hour of greatest need it utterly fails...I have never been able to tolerate this cistern water except in Jerusalem, where they are kept with scrupulous care, and filled from roofs both clean and hard" (*ibid.*).

14—30. ISRAEL'S SIN AND OBSTINACY UNDER PUNISHMENT.

14—17. Co. points out that *v.* 13 connects naturally with *v.* 18. The cisterns from which Israel has sought water proving unavailable, she has tried the rivers of Egypt and Assyria. Accordingly, while holding that the *vv.* are genuine utterances of Jeremiah, he thinks with some considerable probability that they are misplaced here.

14. *Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn slave?*] An emphatic negative is the reply expected, as in *v.* 31. Israel is not a slave but a *son*. Why then is he spoiled? If (which is however doubtful) the early legislation, as given in Ex. xxi. 1—3, still held good, children born to a slave who married one of the slave girls in his master's house, remained the permanent property of their owner. The meaning here will be, Is Israel permanently subjected to each whim of a cruel master? Cp. the somewhat similar passages, viii. 4, xiv. 19; and specially xxii. 28, xlix. 1. •

15. *The young lions have roared upon him, and yelled*] referring to the frequent Assyrian invasions. The lion was the symbol of Assyria (Nah. ii. 12 f.). Cp. Is. v. 29 (of an attacking host).

16 are burned up, without inhabitant. The children also of Noph and Tahpanhes have ¹broken the crown of thy head.
 17 Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when he led thee by the way?

¹ Or, *fed on*

burned up] Many prefer to render, slightly altering MT., *are laid waste, desolated*, as in iv. 7.

16. *also even*. The sense is, *those in whom thou most trustedst*.

Noph] Memphis, formerly the capital of Lower (i.e. Northern) Egypt, the word Noph representing some colloquial Semitic or Egyptian pronunciation of the name. Its site was near what is now Cairo.

Tahpanhes] now *Tell Defneh*, the Greek *Daphnae Pelusii*, which Herodotus mentions (II. 30) as a town in which a garrison was maintained against the Syrians and Arabians. It bears an important part in the history contained in the later chapters of Jeremiah. Johanan and the other captains went there in spite of the prophet's directions (xliii. 7). It was on the eastern branch of the Nile, and commanded the road to Palestine, thus being a frontier post of great importance. The towns of Noph and Tahpanhes would both be well known to the Jews even in Josiah's day, the former as a capital city, the latter from its position. The two places occur again in conjunction in xliv. 1, xlv. 14. The pyramids and extensive necropolis still draw multitudes of visitors to Memphis. The site of Tahpanhes has been excavated by Dr Flinders Petrie with interesting results relating to Ptolemaic and Roman times. See HDB. *s.v.*

have broken] *mg. fed on*. The latter rendering represents the sense of the Hebrew verb according to the vowel points assigned it by the Massoretes, but the figure is too strange a one to be easily accepted. That of the text, on the other hand, would require different vocalisation (*yěro'uk* for *yir'uk*), but in this case too the figure is over strong for the circumstances; seeing what is meant is nothing more than some affliction coming from Egypt. At any rate it is best to render by a future rather than a present tense. There is however a third way of pointing the word which is far from improbable, though it also involves the transposing of two consonants, viz. *yě'aruk*, "will *shave* the crown of your head." It is true that we must assume the existence of the Hebrew verb in that sense, but the supposition is scarcely a precarious one, as the Hebrew for 'razor' is apparently derived from this root. In that case the *v.* may be paraphrased thus: the Assyrians *have* ravaged thee. The Egyptians, to whom some of you are looking for help, *will* presently *fleece* you (as they did, 2 Kgs xxiii. 35). A shaven head was the sign of disgrace or of mourning (xlvii. 5, xlviii. 37; Is. iii. 17, 24, xv. 2, xxii. 12).

17. *when he led thee by the way*] If the text be right, the reference is to wilderness journeyings. But there can be little doubt that the

And now what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt, to ¹⁸ drink the waters of ¹Shihor? or what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria, to drink the waters of ²the River? Thine ¹⁹ own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord, the

¹ That is, the Nile.

² That is, the Euphrates.

words (omitted by LXX) have arisen from a scribe's error in writing twice over the first four Hebrew words of *v.* 18.

18. *what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt*] The thought is the same as that expressed in Is. xxx. 1—3. Ever since the time when Psammetichus I (B.C. 663—610), king of Egypt, reduced under his own sway the twelve separate kingdoms into which that country had been formed, there was a party of statesmen at Jerusalem who favoured an Egyptian alliance. This party Jeremiah constantly opposed.

to drink the waters of Shihor] to hold communication with Egypt, and espouse its cause. The figure has been already suggested by the mention of fountains and cisterns (*v.* 13).

Shihor] The word, which properly means turbid, is shewn by the context to be equivalent to the Nile, a word which itself denotes blue, or dark; so probably in Is. xxiii. 3. Sometimes (as in Josh. xiii. 3; 1 Chr. xiii. 5) the name is confined to the easternmost branch of the Nile.

what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria] Both Israel and Judah had vacillated for many reigns between Egypt and Assyria. Menahem king of Israel bribed Pul king of Assyria to support him, and to him also his successors Pekahiah and Pekah seem to have looked. Hoshea sought the aid of Egypt to enable him to throw off the Assyrian yoke, while Josiah met his death in fighting against it and on behalf of the Eastern empire, Assyria's successor. Thus subservience now to one now to the other quarter was familiar to those whom Jeremiah addressed. Hosea (vii. 11) had likened Israel in its vacillation to "a silly dove, without understanding."

to drink the waters of the River] Euphrates, the great river, on which was built Babylon. Cp. Is. viii. 7.

19. *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee*] Thy misdeeds shall bring their own punishment with them. *Correct* in the sense (now growing obsolete) of *chastise*. Cp. x. 24, xxx. 11, xlvi. 28. So in Prov. xxix. 17.

backslidings] lit. *backturnings*, apostasy. The Hebrew word with the exception of its occurrence in Prov. (i. 32) and a doubtful use in Ezek. (xxxvii. 23, R.V. mg.) is confined to Hos. (xi. 7, xiv. 4) and Jer., with whom it is a favourite (iii. 22, v. 6, etc.).

and that my fear] depending on "it is an evil thing and a bitter." In

- 20 LORD of hosts. For of old time ¹I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not ²serve; for upon every high hill and under every green tree thou
21 didst bow thyself, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

¹ Or, *thou hast*

² Another reading is, *transgress*.

other words the evil and bitterness are twofold; (a) desertion, (b) indifference.

my fear] The fear of Me.

20. *I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands*] mg. *thou hast* is doubtless right. So LXX and Vulg. The identity of the archaic form of the pronominal ending for the 2nd person fem. with the ordinary 1st person sing. sufficiently accounts for the error. Israel's rebellion is of long standing.

serve] The other reading, *transgress*, is no doubt later and formed by a very slight change in one of the letters of the verb in the original, which was made probably in consequence of the preceding verbs being taken to be in the 1st person.

didst bow thyself] The reference is to the rendering of idolatrous worship, renouncing of allegiance to the true God Who has espoused the people to Himself, and readiness to indulge in the gross immoralities of non-Israelitish cults. The passage appears to be an echo of Hos. iv. 13 f. (cp. Am. ii. 7), and the charge made in the last part not to be merely a metaphor denoting unfaithfulness to their Divine Spouse. The danger involved in retaining the places of worship which the heathen inhabitants had used is indicated by the command in Deut. xii. 2 f.

21. The fault did not lie in Jehovah's planting, but in Israel's perversity. Hos. x. 1 has the same illustration. Jeremiah has probably a reminiscence also of Is. v. 1 ff., where, however, Israel is not as here the vine, but the vineyard in which it is planted.

a noble vine] a Sorek vine, the word Sorek probably referring to the colour of the fruit, a vine bearing dark-purple grapes. It is the "choice vine" of Gen. xlix. 11.

how then art thou turned] That which had been sown, in other words the people, when first chosen to be God's, was uncorrupt. How is it then, He asks, that such "right seed" can have produced such degenerate shoots?

degenerate plant] The Hebrew is harsh, and suggested emendations are rendered either (with LXX) *bitterness*, or (with Dr.) *evil smell*.

strange] *foreign*. For the word in this sense cp. Gen. xlii. 7; Ex. xxi. 8; Ps. cxiv. 1 and so

And palmers for to seeken *straunge* strondes.

Chaucer, *Cant. Tales*, prol.

unto me] to my grief—a frequent use of the dative case.

For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much 22
 soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord
 GOD. How canst thou say, I am not defiled, I have not 23
 gone after the Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know
 what thou hast done: *thou art* a swift ¹dromedary traversing

¹ Or, *young camel*

22. *lye*] the same as washing-soda. "It occurs as an incrustation on the ground in Egypt, Persia and elsewhere, and is also a constituent in the water of certain saline lakes. The most famous of the latter are the 'natron lakes' in Egypt. They lie in the 'natron valley' about 60 miles W.N.W. of Cairo." HDB. s. v. Nitre.

soap] As natron is a *mineral* so this is a *vegetable* alkali. *Salsola kali* (saltwort) is the chief plant among those used in its production, and is found in abundance on the Mediterranean coast of Palestine, as well as on the shores of the Dead Sea. This and other plants on being burnt furnish ashes, the lye of which (formed by passing water through them) was used for cleansing purposes. The immense heaps of rubbish frequently found in Palestine shew the extent of the manufacture. Soap-making by the admixture of oils and animal fat, now a prominent branch of industry in Palestine, was much later than Jeremiah's time.

thine iniquity is marked] The original word occurs nowhere else in O.T. and apparently means *stained*. Cp. our expression, (iniquity) of the deepest *dye*.

23. If we may assume that this utterance relates to the time before Josiah's reforms, the people could not deny that their worship at the high places included observances outside those belonging to Jehovah. They maintained, however, that it was to Him and not to the Baals, that their service was all the time actually rendered. The prophet here replies that in adopting heathen rites they *ipso facto*, whatever intention they might plead, rendered their worship abhorrent to the God of Israel.

Baalim] The Hebrew plural. See on ii. 8.

the valley] The valley of Hinnom; see on vii. 31. It was devoted under idolatrous kings to impure sacrifices and human offerings to Molech, who no doubt was one of the gods called collectively Baalim. (Cp. vii. 31 f., xix. 5, xxxii. 35.) The valley was defiled by Josiah in order that such sacrifices might cease, and here dead bodies of men and animals were cast. From the Hebrew word in a Greek dress (*Gehenna*) comes one of the names for the place of future punishment, of which this valley was considered by the later Jews a symbol, and which some of them believed to contain the entrance to hell.

dromedary] better, as mg. *young camel*. The Hebrew denotes a female that has not yet had a foal.

traversing] (lit. **entangling**) running quickly hither and thither in

24 her ways ; a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth
up the wind in her desire ; in her occasion who can turn
her away ? all they that seek her will not weary themselves ;
25 in her month they shall find her. Withhold thy foot from
being unshod, and thy throat from thirst : but thou saidst,
There is no hope : no ; for I have loved strangers, and after
26 them will I go. As the thief is ashamed when he is found,
so is the house of Israel ashamed ; they, their kings, their
27 princes, and their priests, and their prophets ; which say to

the eagerness of her passion, crossing and recrossing her own course. So Israel runs now here now there, ever in search of a fresh object of devotion, and forsaking her lawful Spouse.

24. *a wild ass used to the wilderness*] revelling in uncontrolled licence. Cp. Job xxxix. 5 ff. The noun is not a simile for the young camel of v. 23 (a metaphor within a metaphor), but a further metaphor for Israel. Some commentators propose to read the Heb. consonants with other vowels, giving the meaning *heifer*. But the whole expression requires, not an animal originally tame, but one “used to” a wilderness life. Co., however, would omit from a “wild ass” to “desire,” conjecturing that it is a gloss suggested by xiv. 6.

snuffeth up the wind] looking out for every occasion that offers to sin.

will not weary themselves, etc.] Her lovers (i.e. the Baals) need not trouble themselves. No courting of her favour will be wanted on their part. In the month of her pairing she will seek them eagerly.

25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst*] Do not pursue thy shameless quest in recklessness and heat, till thy sandals are worn out, and thy throat parched. The words of the reply, the first part of which we might render, “Hopeless ! No !” express the desperate determination to continue in sin.

strangers] i.e. foreign gods. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 16.

26. Israel, though insensible now to their disgrace, will realise it presently and all classes will be filled with confusion (as a detected thief) when the penalty arrives. Cp. Is. i. 29 ff.

ashamed] disconcerted by the failure of plans, a frequent sense of the word : cp. v. 36, xvii. 18, xlviii. 13 ; Job vi. 20 ; Joel i. 11.

27. The “stock” and “stone” symbolize the god worshipped, and doubtless include the wooden poles (Asherahs) and stone obelisks or pillars by which they were represented. The words addressed to them by the worshippers do not imply that the latter considered the spirits of their ancestors to be there embodied. Such worship was not a Hebrew practice. It was only as patrons or guardians of house or land that such titles as father or mother were given them.

which say] In this consists their disgrace. They attribute to their idols the honour due to the Creator alone.

a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast¹ brought² me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. But where are thy gods²⁸ that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed²⁹ against me, saith the LORD. In vain have I smitten your³⁰ children; they received no³ correction: your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion. O³¹ generation, see ye the word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? or a land of⁴ thick darkness?

¹ Or, *begotten me*

² Another reading is, *us*.

³ Or, *instruction*

⁴ Or, *darkness from Jah*

in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us] Their idols are but fair-weather friends. When a crisis comes, they will recognise this, and appeal for help to Him Whom they have rejected.

28. Jehovah's sarcastic answer to the people's appeal. Do you cry to Me? Cry to the gods of your choice.

for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods] *It cannot be through any scarcity in number that the gods whom thou hast chosen come not to thine aid.* LXX add here, as they do in the parallel passage xi. 13 (where MT. gives them a general support), "and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem they sacrifice to the Baal."

29. *plead with me]* remonstrate against My wrath. For "plead" see on v. 9, and cp. xii. 1.

30. *your children]* not literally such, nor yet young men slain in battle, but equivalent to the frequent expression "children of thy people" (e.g. Ezek. iii. 11, xxxiii. 2, 12, 17, 30), i.e. the people considered individually, as contrasted with the aggregate.

your prophets] Some commentators make the reference to be to such events as those recorded in 1 Kgs xviii. 4—13, or to some unknown outbreak of violence. But the passage may well point to the comparatively recent massacres by Manasseh, traditionally including Isaiah (2 Kgs xxi. 16).

31—37. ISRAEL'S DISREGARD OF JEHOVAH'S PAST FAVOURS.

31. *O generation, see ye]* **O generation that ye are, see.**
a wilderness] Have I been like a place where ye lacked sustenance? Not so. Cp. Hos. ii. 8.

thick darkness] On the contrary ye have had the light of prophetic teaching. The mg. *darkness from Jah* (i.e. Jehovah) is a less likely expression to put into the Divine mouth.

wherefore say my people, We are broken loose; we will
 32 come no more unto thee? Can a maid forget her orna-
 ments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten
 33 me days without number. How trimmest thou thy way to
 seek love! therefore even the wicked women hast thou
 34 taught thy ways. Also in thy skirts is found the blood of
 the souls of the innocent poor: ¹I have not found it at ²the
 35 place of breaking in, but upon ³all these. Yet thou saidst,
 I am innocent; surely his anger is turned away from me.
 Behold, I will enter into judgement with thee, because thou
 36 sayest, I have not sinned. Why gaddest thou about so

¹ Or, *thou didst not find them*

² See Ex. xxii. 2.

³ Some ancient authorities have, *every oak*.

We are broken loose] Cp. Gen. xxvii. 40 (R.V.) "shalt break loose." The notion of having power to carry out one's own will, is at the bottom in each case.

32. *attire*] *sash*, and so rendered by R.V. in Is. iii. 20. The exact meaning is unknown, but it was plainly an indispensable part of a bride's costume.

33. *How trimmest thou thy way*] lit. *How thou makest thy way good*! i.e. How cleverly thou goest about (to reach an immoral object)!

even the wicked women, etc.] even experts in immorality can learn fresh wickedness from thee. LXX ("thou hast done wickedly in corrupting thy ways") very possibly represents a text superior to MT.

34. *blood, etc.*] "The allusion may be to deaths due to miscarriage of justice or the result of exaction (vii. 6, xxii. 3 end, 17; cf. Mic. iii. 10; Ps. xciv. 21), or to the sacrifice of children (see xix. 4; cf. Ps. cvi. 38) or possibly to the martyrdoms under Manasseh (2 Kgs xxi. 16, xxiv. 4)." Dr.

I have not found it at the place of breaking in] or perhaps *not at house-breaking didst thou catch them*. The allusion is to the law (Ex. xxii. 2) by which it was permitted to slay a thief caught in the act of breaking into a house. The persons whom Israel had thus treated were in no such position, but such was nevertheless their fate.

but upon all these] The words are obscure and probably the text of the whole verse is corrupt. As it stands, "these" must refer to the misdeeds indicated or to the (bloodstained) "skirts" incriminating the offenders. By a slight modification of the MT. we get the LXX rendering of "all these," viz. *every oak*. This, however, can hardly be defended.

35. Israel protests that her innocence is proved by her prosperity, which marks Jehovah's favour. He replies that judgement awaits her for her denial of guilt.

much to change thy way? thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt also, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. From him also 37 shalt thou go forth, with thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

¹They say, ²If a man put away his wife, and she go 3 from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? But

¹ Heb. *Saying*.

² See Deut. xxiv. 1—4.

36. *to change thy way*] to turn from Assyria and seek the aid of Egypt. The negotiations here referred to are unknown. LXX, vocalising MT. differently, render, *Why makest thou so light of changing thy way?*

ashamed] See on v. 26.

thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt also] This was literally fulfilled, when the Egyptians were expected to raise the siege of Jerusalem in the reign of Zedekiah, but failed to do so (xxxvii. 5).

thou wast ashamed of Assyria] An instance of this occurred in the reign of Ahaz, when in spite of his presents to the king of Assyria, that monarch helped him not (2 Chr. xxviii. 21. See also Is. vii., viii.).

37. *From him also shalt thou go forth*] The king of Egypt shall repulse thy advances, and thou shalt return mourning.

thine hands upon thine head] in disgrace and disappointment; cp. 2 Sam. xiii. 19.

thy confidences] those in whom thou confidest, Egypt and Assyria.

CH. III. 1—5. ISRAEL'S FAITHLESSNESS TOWARDS HER SPOUSE.

1. *They say*] The Hebrew is simply *saying*. Either the opening words of v. 6 have been displaced and should stand here, or a similar introductory clause has accidentally dropped out. The connexion of thought is: the Lord refuses to recognise either Egypt or Assyria as the lawful spouse of His people, at the same time saying that as they have chosen to forsake Him for them, He will act in accordance with the law of divorce and will refuse to receive Israel again.

shall he return unto her again?] According to Deut. xxiv. 1—4, when a woman left her husband in accordance with a bill of divorce and was married to another, even a bill of divorce given her by her new husband did not enable the former one to take her back. As the illustration applies to Israel's return to Jehovah, not His to her, there is something to be said for the LXX's reading, viz. *Shall she indeed return to him?* The form of the MT. has been accounted for as a reference to Deut. as above, although we cannot say that the Deuteronomic

thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; ¹yet return
 2 again to me, saith the LORD. Lift up thine eyes unto the
 bare heights, and see; where hast thou not been lien with?
 By the ways hast thou sat for them, as an Arabian in the
 wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy
 3 whoredoms and with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers
 have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain;
 yet thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be
 4 ashamed. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My
 5 father, thou art the ²guide of my youth? Will he retain *his*
anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou

¹ Or, *and thinkest thou to return &c.?*

² Or, *companion*

code on the matter was as yet in operation. Moreover the case contemplated in that passage is one of divorce, and Israel had not been divorced. In the time of Saul the *marriage* of a divorced woman to a second husband did not preclude her from returning to the former one (see 1 Sam. xxv. 44; 2 Sam. iii. 14 f.). The prophet, however, may be here thinking of the contraction of an illegitimate union by a divorced woman. "His argument is apparently this: If a man divorces his wife and she lives with another man, how can her first husband take her back, defiled as she is for him? But Judah's case is still worse, for she has not been divorced, and has contracted an adulterous union not with one lover but with many." Pe.

yet return] and thinkest thou to return (as mg.). An expression of surprise. It is impossible surely to play fast and loose with God in such a matter—a thing forbidden even in human affairs.

2. Israel is shameless and wholly given up to idolatrous excesses.

bare heights] a favourite word in this Book (v. 21, iv. 11 etc.).

an Arabian in the wilderness] lit. steppe-dwellers (of N. Arabia).

See on xxv. 24. As they lie in wait for companies of travellers passing, so does Israel seek eagerly its unholy rites.

3. *no latter rain*] See ch. v. 24, and for the general thought cp. Am. iv. 6 ff. The wholly different rendering of the clause by LXX, though doubtless wrong, suggests an original Hebrew with the sense, *And thy many friends* (lovers or idols) *were a snare to thee.*

4. *Wilt thou not from this time cry*] **Hast thou not but now cried.** Judah, at the very time that she is deserting Jehovah, is using to Him the language of wheedling affection.

guide] mg. *companion*. The same word is used of a husband in Prov. ii. 17.

5. The continued expression of Israel's ill-founded confidence and God's reply.

¹hast spoken and hast done evil things, and hast ²had thy way.

Moreover the LORD said unto me in the days of Josiah 6 the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. ³And I 7 said after she had done all these things, ⁴She will return unto me; but she returned not: and her treacherous sister

¹ Or, *hast spoken* thus, *but hast done* &c.

² Heb. *been able*.

³ Or, *And I said, After she hath done all these things, she* &c.

⁴ Or, *Let her return unto me*

thou hast spoken, etc.] rather (as mg.) *thou hast spoken* thus, *but hast done, etc.*

hast had thy way] Heb. *been able*, carried thy purposes into effect. For the thought of the whole verse cp. Hos. vi. 1—4.

CHS. III. 6—IV. 4. CONDITIONAL OFFERS OF RESTORATION.

We may subdivide thus.

(1) iii. 6—18. The ten tribes as less guilty than Judah are invited to repent and return. (2) iii. 19—iv. 4. The invitation includes the whole nation, on a like condition.

6—18. Dr. (with Co. and others) points out that here the word “Israel” is used in its restricted sense for the ten tribes, whereas in ii. 1—iii. 5 it meant the people as a whole, and he infers that the passage, though (apart from certain insertions) genuine and of the age of Josiah, has been inserted from some other context, so that v. 19 should follow immediately on v. 5. Jeremiah’s general reasoning here is: Israel, though guilty, is less so than Judah, who, in defiance of the warning afforded by her sister’s exile, has since plunged deeper into sin. If then Judah may still avert overthrow by repentance and amendment, how much more Israel?

6. *backsliding Israel*] lit. *Israel* “(which is) *apostasy* (itself).” The play on the two senses of the Hebrew verb to *turn back* from Yahweh, and to turn back (or *return*) from false gods to Him, which runs through all this passage (as far as iv. 1) is lost by the rendering “backsliding.” See Dr. p. 340.

hath done] rather *did* (and so for the following verbs, *went up...there played*). Samaria had fallen, c. B.C. 722.

7. *I said*] to myself; I thought.

after she had done, etc.] mg. better, *After she hath done all these things, she, etc.*

8 Judah saw it. And ¹I saw, when, for this very cause that
 backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her
 away and given her a bill of divorcement, yet treacherous
 Judah her sister feared not; but she also went and played
 9 the harlot. And it came to pass through the lightness of
 her whoredom, that the land was polluted, and she com-
 10 mitted adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for
 all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not returned unto
 me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.
 11 And the LORD said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath shewn
 12 herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and
 proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return,
 thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; I will not ²look in
 anger upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, I will
 13 not keep *anger* for ever. Only ³acknowledge thine iniquity,
 that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and
 hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green
 tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.
 14 Return, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am

¹ Some ancient authorities have, *she saw that, for &c.*

² Heb. *cause my countenance to fall upon you.* ³ Or, *know*

8. *I saw*] rather (as mg.) **she** (Judah) **saw that etc.**, thus harmonizing with the similar passage, Ezek. xxiii. 11.

9. *lightness*] frivolity. The Hebrew word occurs here only in this sense.

with stones and with stocks] See on ii. 27.

11—13. In spite of (i) greater privileges, (a) succession of kings of the same family, (b) the Temple, (c) Levites; (ii) the warning example of Israel, Judah has proved faithless and hypocritical as well (v. 4). Therefore the prophet is bidden to look toward the North (Assyria) whither the captives had been led. Upon sincere acknowledgment of sin pardon will ensue.

12. *look in anger*] lit. as mg. *cause my countenance to fall upon you.* For the falling of the countenance in this sense, cp. Gen. iv. 5.

13. *hast scattered thy ways*] hast wandered hither and thither. Cp. ii. 23.

strangers] foreign gods. Cp. ii. 25.

14—18. Much here is probably a later editorial insertion (see Intr. iv. § 8), for (i) the picture (v. 14) of a very limited number of the captives returning from Assyria, and settling in Jerusalem, while afterwards (v. 16) spreading over the land, is inconsistent with xxxi. 7 ff., (ii) we have no warrant for thinking that Jeremiah (v. 17) expected all

a husband unto you : and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion : and I will ¹⁵ give you shepherds according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall ¹⁶ come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD ; neither shall it come to mind : neither shall they remember it ; neither shall they ¹⁷ ¹visit it ; neither ²shall *that* be done any more. At that

¹ Or, *miss* ² Or, *shall it be made any more*

nations to gather at Jerusalem to worship, (iii) *v.* 18 contemplates a return of Judah and Israel together from exile, but the earlier part of the ch. emphasizes the difference of treatment to be accorded to the two. Is the reference to the Ark (*v.* 16) also late? After Solomon's time its history is obscure. Was it carried off by Shishak (1 Kgs xiv. 26), or removed by Manasseh (as suggested by 2 Chr. xxxiii. 7) to be replaced, according to the Chronicler's tradition (2 Chr. xxxv. 3); by Josiah, though there is no confirmation of this in the parallel account in 2 Kgs xxiii. We therefore cannot be sure that it existed in Jeremiah's time. The post-exilic Temple had no Ark (Josephus, *Wars*, v. v. 5). But whether the Ark was still in existence or not, this part of *v.* 16 is probably a genuine fragment, though displaced, for the prophet's attitude towards the Ark, as symbolical of the old Covenant which was destined to yield to the new one for which he looked (xxxi. 31 ff.), is paralleled by his view as to the Temple (vii. 4).

14. *one of...family*] Very small places were called "cities," while "family" must mean a considerable number, a clan, or even a larger group. Cp. viii. 3, xxv. 9.

15. *shepherds*] See on ch. ii. 8.

16. The Ark, which had been the seat of the special manifestation of Jehovah, shall be forgotten, because the whole city shall be filled with His presence.

And it shall...in the land] Probably a later insertion in the passage, connecting with the "one" and "two" of *v.* 14, and implying that when they came to be numerous, they would no longer need the Ark as symbol, while till then it would be essential. In accordance with this view are the words "be multiplied and increased," as being an expression characteristic of the *exilic* document (P), which forms one of the component parts of the Pentateuch. Cp. the same two verbs (identical in the Hebrew) in xxiii. 3, and so in Ezek. xxxvi. 11.

in those days] a phrase denoting the ideal future. Cp. v. 18, xxxiii. 16. *visit*] rather (with mg.) *miss*, feel the want of.

neither shall that be done any more] rather (with mg.) *neither shall it* (the Ark) *be made any more*; no visible symbol shall be needed.

time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after
 18 the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk ¹with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the
 19 land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers. But I said, How ²shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, ³a goodly heritage of the hosts of the nations? and I said, ⁴Ye shall call me My father; and
 20 shall not turn away from following me. Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

¹ Or, *to* ² Or, *would...nations!* ³ Or, *the goodliest heritage of the nations* ⁴ Another reading is, *Thou shalt...and shalt not &c.*

17. *all the nations*] Gentile peoples shall be gathered into the Church of God, which shall thus become Universal. But see introd. note on vv. 14—18.

stubbornness] a favourite word in this Book.

18. For the reunion of the returned Israel and Judah cp. Ezek. xxxvii. 16—28; also Is. xi. 12—14.

CHS. III. 19—IV. 4. THE INVITATION INCLUDES THE WHOLE NATION, ON A LIKE CONDITION.

This section should follow immediately on v. 5. See introd. note on vv. 6—18.

19, 20. Jehovah would desire to treat His people as sons in the matter of inheritance. Their conduct precludes this.

19. *shall...nations*] rightly mg. *would...nations!* Not a question, but the expression of a wish.

children] **sons.** Cp. Exod. iv. 22. The point is that as daughters could not as a rule inherit (Num. xxvii. 1 ff.; cp. Job xlii. 15), God desired to treat His people as sons.

goodly heritage of the hosts] **heritage of the chief splendour, or, goodliest heritage,** mg. *the goodliest heritage of the nations*, lit. “the heritage of the beauty of the beauties (better than ‘hosts’) of the nations.” Cp. Ezek. xx. 6, 15; Dan. xi. 16, 41. The sense is that Israel shall have a more glorious land than any other nation.

20. *O house of Israel*] Israel as including Judah.

21—25. Vividly drawn picture of Judah’s repentance. From the high places, the very scenes of her idolatrous excess, there comes a sound, at first of inarticulate weeping. In response to Jehovah’s

A voice is heard upon the bare heights, the weeping *and* 21 the supplications of the children of Israel; for that they have perverted their way, they have forgotten the LORD their God. Return, ye backsliding children, I will heal 22 your backslidings. Behold, we are come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God. Truly in vain is *the help that* 23 *is looked for* from the hills, the ¹tumult on the mountains: truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel. But 24 the ²shameful thing hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. Let us lie down in our shame, and let our 25 confusion cover us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day: and we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

¹ Or, *noisy throng*² Heb. *shame*. See ch. xi. 13.

gracious invitation, the emotion ventures to express itself in words of deep shame and contrition.

21. *bare heights*] For the choice of such places for lamentation cp. ch. vii. 29; Is. xv. 2; Judg. xi. 37.

22. God's reply to the lamentation and expressions of repentance. The Hebrew is striking in its play on the word *turn*, *Turn, ye turned* children; I will heal your *turnings*. Cp. v. 6; Hos. xiv. 4.

23. *Truly in vain is the help that is looked for from the hills, the tumult on the mountains*] The Hebrew construction is difficult. MT. reads, *Truly in vain from the hills the tumult the mountains*. Probably a word such as *sound* should be restored in the first clause, while the change of a Hebrew vowel point enables us to insert *on* in the second. So Dr. The tumult (mg. *noisy throng*) denotes the orgies that attended on idol worship. Cp. Hos. iv. 13.

24. Vain was the boisterous service spoken of in v. 23. It is not merely without profit, but most hurtful.

the shameful thing] Heb. *Bosheth* (shame), a word frequently substituted for Baal, when the latter had come to have idolatrous and therefore shameful associations. Cp. xi. 13, where the two are identified, also Hos. ix. 10; so too Jerubbaal (Judg. vi. 32) = Jerubbesheth (2 Sam. xi. 21); Eshbaal (1 Chr. viii. 33) = Ishbosheth (2 Sam. ii. 8).

their sons and their daughters] See on v. 17, and cp. 2 Kgs xvi. 3, xxi. 6.

25. *Let us lie down*] Cp. for such a custom as indicative of very painful feelings 2 Sam. xii. 16, xiii. 31; 1 Kgs xxi. 4.

cover] Cp. Ps. cix. 29.

- 4 If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, unto me shalt thou return: and ¹if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not be removed; 2 and thou shalt swear, As the LORD liveth, in truth, in judgement, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.
- 3 For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not 4 among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury go forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of

¹ Or, *if thou wilt put...and wilt not wander, and wilt swear...then shall the nations &c. or, then shalt thou swear...and the nations &c.*

IV. 1—4. If Israel will sincerely repent and mend her ways, her prosperity will be the ideal for all nations. Let Judah dedicate herself in heart to Jehovah, otherwise heavy judgement shall be her portion.

In vv. 1—4 a severer mode of address is used towards Judah (3, 4) than towards Israel (1, 2).

1. *If thou wilt return, etc.*] The best rendering is perhaps as follows: *If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, yea, return unto me*, continuing (with mg.), *and if thou wilt put...and wilt not wander, and wilt swear...then shall the nations, etc.*

abominations] detestable things, idolatrous worship, mingled, as it often was, with impure rites.

be removed] **wander** (from God). By a change of one Hebrew letter we get the word rendered "broken loose" in ii. 31. This is to be preferred, as it is doubtful whether the verb in MT. can have a moral connotation.

2. *shall bless themselves in him*] not in Israel, but in God, i.e. they will use Jehovah's name in invoking blessings on themselves.

3. *Break up*] The ground of their heart is hard. It needs as it were the plough and the harrow. Moreover, it is overgrown with thorns. These must be removed.

4. *Circumcise yourselves to the LORD*] Literal circumcision was the condition of admission to the external covenant. "Jeremiah demands an inward circumcision, a cleansing and dedication of the heart. Such a doctrine naturally points the way to his supreme contribution to religious thought, his epoch-making conception of the New Covenant (xxxi. 31—34)." Pe.

These two vv. prove a worthy climax to the whole section. Co. however is hardly justified in omitting vv. 1, 2 on the ground of comparative weakness.

your doings. Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; 5 and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry aloud and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the fenced

CH. IV. 5—31. IMPENDING JUDGEMENTS. NATIONAL
DISASTER.

This section and the two that follow it (viz. chs. v. and vi.) are somewhat later than the preceding, as presenting a more definite description of the punishment there threatened. They picture the excitement and dismay caused throughout the defenceless portions of the land by the approach of the enemy, and the hasty retreat to walled towns on the part of the country people.

No doubt as originally uttered these sections referred to the threatened invasion of Palestine by the Scythian hordes. (See *Intro.* i. § 3 and on i. 13.) On being reproduced in the Roll of B.C. 604 (ch. xxxvi.), when the Chaldaeans had become the formidable enemy, the language may have been modified here and there to suit the new political aspect of affairs. Thus "lion" and "destroyer of nations" (iv. 7) are epithets more appropriate to an individual leader such as Nebuchadnezzar than to a hostile multitude. Neither do we know that the Scythians had "chariots" (v. 13).

The present section may be summarized as follows.

5—10. Flee without delay, if so be that walls can save you. The foe from the north threatens ruin to town and country alike. Terror shall seize the greatest in the land, and dismay the priests and prophets.

11—18. As the burning sirocco, the dense clouds accompanied by the whirlwind, or the savage creatures of the air, so shall the enemy prove to be, as they descend on Judah in doom. Let her even now seek to avert it by repentance.

19—22. The prophet is racked with grief at the noise of war and the thought of its horrors—and all through the mad folly of his people.

23—28. In vision he beholds the earth a void waste, the hills reeling at the blast of God's anger, the heavens black, all bird life fled, cities in ruins. Jehovah's resolve is an abiding one.

29—31. Embellishments of the person are of no avail. Zion cries out in vain before an implacable foe.

5. *in Jerusalem*] But a proclamation that people should take refuge within cities would not be needed there. It is probable that the words should be omitted. Moreover, by a very slight change in the Hebrew, the first "and say" may be read "saith Jehovah." Thus we may with probability emend, *Declare ye in Judah, and publish, saith Jehovah, Blow, etc.*

trumpet] **horn**, as a signal of danger.

let us go, etc.] Cp. the crowding of the inhabitants of Attica within the walls of Athens on the occasion of a Spartan invasion (Thuc. ii. 52).

6 cities. Set up a standard toward Zion: flee for safety, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. A lion is gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations; he is on his way, he is gone forth from his place; to make thy land desolate, that thy cities be laid waste, without inhabitant. For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us. And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the LORD, that the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul. At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A hot wind

6. *Set up a standard*] to guide those who were seeking to attain the shelter of the walls of Jerusalem.

flee] rather, **make (your households) flee**. Cp. mg. in Is. x. 31; and Ex. ix. 19 ("hasten in").

from the north] See introd. note to the section.

destruction] For the alarm caused by the Scythians, see Introd. i. § 3.

7. *A lion*] See introd. note above.

thy land] We should perhaps read *the land*, and consider the rest of the v. as an insertion suggested by the parallels in ii. 15, ix. 11.

Du. proposes, but on insufficient grounds (viz. the use of the expression "at that day," as though implying vagueness as to time, and a change in the character of the metre), to omit vv. 9—11 a (...*Jerusalem*).

9. *the priests shall be astonished*] because of the punishment which has followed upon their idolatries.

the prophets shall wonder] because of the non-fulfilment of their prophecies.

10. *Then said I*] We should doubtless, by a slight change, read, *And they shall say*. The false prophets, who had foretold peace (vi. 14, xiv. 13, xxiii. 17), shall in their dismay charge God with deception. Doubtless an argument in the mouths of those prophets and their supporters had hitherto been, "Isaiah assured us (xxxvii. 33 ff.), when the City and Temple were in danger, that Jehovah would protect His own dwelling place. His words were justified by the event. May we not have the same assurance now?"

11—18. See summary at commencement of section.

11. *A hot wind*] The foe comes not as a gentle wind, such as that used (see on xv. 7) to separate wheat from chaff, but one that shall whirl

from the bare heights in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse; ¹a full wind from ¹² these shall come for me: now will I also ²utter judgements against them. Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his ¹³ chariots *shall be* as the whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled. O Jerusalem, ¹⁴ wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thine evil thoughts lodge within thee? For ³a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth ¹⁵

¹ Or, *a wind too strong for this*

² See ch. i. 16.

³ Or, *there is a voice of one that declareth &c.*

away both together. Thomson (*op. cit.* p. 295) describes the sirocco thus: "The air becomes loaded with fine dust, which it whirls in rainless clouds hither and thither at its own wild will....The eyes inflame, the lips blister, and the moisture of the body evaporates, under the ceaseless application of this persecuting wind"; and again (p. 536), "We have two kinds of sirocco, one accompanied with vehement wind, which fills the air with dust and fine sand." Cp. Joel ii. 30 f.

bare heights] omitted by LXX. Cp. on iii. 2.

toward] we may understand *cometh* from v. 12.

daughter] fem. sing. in a collective sense. Cp. v. 30, vi. 14, viii. 11, etc.

12. *a full wind from these*] i.e. a violent wind from the bare heights in the wilderness. It is better, however, to render nearly as mg. **a wind too strong for these things**, too violent for winnowing and cleansing because it blows away the corn as well (see on xv. 7). The LXX, it may be noted, omit "from these."

shall come for me] at My command, or, in My service. The judgement will not be remedial but destructive.

now will I also] The pronoun is emphatic. Cp. i. 16.

13. *as clouds*] a further simile for the invader. Cp. Ezek. xxxviii. 16, and Joel ii. 2.

his chariots shall be as the whirlwind] Cp. Is. v. 28, lxvi. 15.

eagles] rather, *griffons* (*gypsi fulvus*), a species of vulture. Cp. ch. xlviii. 40, xlix. 22; 2 Sam. i. 23; Lam. iv. 19; Hab. i. 8.

14. *How long, etc.*] Cp. Hos. viii. 5.

15. The connexion is, It is high time to amend, for, etc.

a voice] better, *Hark! one declareth*.

Dan] on the northern border of Palestine. See Deut. xxxiv. 1.

the hills of Ephraim] or, Mount Ephraim, the range dividing Ephraim from Judah, eight or ten miles at most from Jerusalem itself. The language thus intimates the rapid approach of the enemy. Cp. Is. x. 28 ff.

- 16 evil from the hills of Ephraim: make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against
 17 the cities of Judah. As keepers of a field are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against
 18 me, saith the LORD. Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness; ¹for it is bitter, ¹for it reacheth unto thine heart.
 19 My bowels, my bowels! ²I am pained at ³my very heart; my heart is disquieted in me; I cannot hold my peace; because ⁴thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the

¹ Or, *surely*² Another reading is, *I will wait patiently.*³ Heb. *the walls of my heart.*⁴ Or, as otherwise read, *my soul heareth*

16. *make ye mention to the nations*] They are bidden to witness the impending judgement. Cp. Mic. i. 2, and the appeal to heaven and earth in Is. i. 2, Mic. vi. 1 f.

watchers] besiegers, the Chaldaeans. But to obtain this sense we must omit the first consonant of the Hebrew word. By a change of one consonant we get the Hebrew for *leopards* (*nēmêrim*). Cp. v. 6; Hab. i. 8.

17. *As keepers of a field*] If the MT. stands, the point of comparison will lie in the improvised shelters put up by guardians of cattle in the open country and those put up now by the besiegers round the city. Cp. Job xxvii. 18; 2 Sam. xi. 11. But by an inconsiderable change we can translate, *they* (the enemy) *are lying in wait on the fields round about.* So Co.

18. *Thy way and thy doings*] See on vii. 3.
wickedness] i.e. its result, viz. *calamity.*

19—22. See summary at commencement of section.

19. *My bowels*] considered as the seat of profound emotion. Cp. xxxi. 20, Is. xvi. 11, lxiii. 15; Ca. v. 4 (R.V. mg.).

I am pained] decidedly to be preferred to mg. *I will wait patiently.*
at my very heart] **O the walls of my heart!** a separate exclamation. The “walls” are the sides of the cavity of the heart or the chest, against which it seems to beat. The prophet is speaking to some extent as a representative of the people.

is disquieted] The word in the Hebrew denotes tumultuous movement, pain, and the expression of it in sound.

thou hast heard, O my soul] better, as mg. (with different vocalisation in the Hebrew) *my soul heareth.* So LXX, Du. and Co. omit “my soul,” and read, with a very slight addition to the Hebrew verb, *I hear.*

trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is 20
cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents
spoiled, *and* my curtains in a moment. How long shall 21
I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?
For my people is foolish, they know me not; they are 22
sottish children, and they have none understanding: they
are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no know-
ledge.

I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was ¹waste and void; and 23
the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the moun- 24
tains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills ²moved to
and fro. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the 25
birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, ³the 26
fruitful field was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were
broken down at the presence of the LORD, *and* before his
fierce anger. For thus saith the LORD, The whole land 27
shall be a desolation; yet will I not make a full end. For 28

¹ See Gen. i. 2.

² Or, *moved lightly*

³ Or, *Carmel*

20. *is cried*] better, *one destruction* (lit. *breach*) *meeteth* (followeth upon) *another*. The Hebrew verb is ambiguous.

curtains] tent-hangings. Cp. x. 20; Ca. i. 5; Is. liv. 2.

22. *know*] have regard to. Cp. Is. i. 3.

23—28. See summary at commencement of section. In these *vv.* the *Ḳinah* rhythm changes to another of a more diffuse kind. Hence, and because of alleged lack of connexion with the neighbouring sections, Du. and Gi. (2nd ed.) consider the passage to be later than Jeremiah's time; but without necessity. The prophet in this singularly powerful description rises to a sublime height. The state of things described in the History of the Creation has returned. All is chaotic. Cp. for *v.* 23 Is. xxxiv. 11.

23. *waste*] formless, unsubstantial. Cp. Gen. i. 2. "And void" is not rendered by LXX either here or in Is., and is therefore probably a gloss from Genesis.

no light] as though a return to chaos before the creation of light. Cp. Gen. *l.c.*

24. *moved to and fro*] mg. *moved lightly*.

25. In spite of their vast size earth and heaven alike are bereft of the denizens which give them their aspect of life. For the disappearance of birds before God's judgements cp. Hos. iv. 3; Zeph. i. 3.

26. *the fruitful field*] mg. Heb. *Carmel* (see ii. 7), but meaning here the most fruitful portions of the land in general.

27. *yet will I not make a full end*] This clause is probably added

this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and I have
 29 not repented, neither will I turn back from it. The whole city fleeth for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they go into the thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every
 30 city is forsaken, and not a man dwelleth therein. And thou, when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with scarlet, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou ¹enlargest thine eyes

¹ Heb. *rendest*.

by a later hand (so perhaps in v. 10), for not only does it interrupt the metre in the original, but it also breaks the connexion between the pronouncements of vv. 27, 28.

28. *be black*] be in mourning from sympathy. The following clauses should read **I have spoken it and have not repented; I have purposed it, and will not turn back from it.** So LXX. The verbs in the Hebrew were accidentally disarranged.

29—31. See summary at commencement of section.

29. *The whole city*] *the whole land.* So LXX, supported by Targ. The word "city" was introduced by mistake from the latter part of the v. *bowmen*] Cp. v. 16. The Scythians were noted for skill in archery. See Herod. iv. 46.

they go...rocks] The original words for "thickets" and "rocks" have been held to throw some doubt on the genuineness of the two clauses. The former is in Hebrew properly *dark clouds*, though the root in Aramaic would yield the sense "thickets." So "rocks" seems a "loan-word" from Aramaic and occurs but once elsewhere (Job xxx. 6). For the first word LXX have a double rendering, *caves* and *woods*. For the former sense they seem to have connected the word with an Arabic root, *to conceal*. Rocks, and the caves which they contained, were often used as places of refuge in the course of Jewish history. See ch. xvi. 16; also Jud. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6; cp. Is. ii. 19, 21.

30. Thy harsh captors will scorn thy feminine arts to make thyself attractive in their eyes. But the anomalous gender (masc.) of the Hebrew participle suggests that it is a gloss.

And thou, when thou art spoiled] **And thou, plundered one.** The fem. indicates, as often, a collective sense; so in v. 11, vii. 29, x. 17. Cp. v. 31; so also Ps. xlv. 12.

ornaments of gold] Cp. Hos. ii. 13.

enlargest (Heb. *rendest*) *thine eyes with paint*] i.e. with antimony. It was considered that the lustre and apparent size of the pupil of the eye were enhanced by this practice, which consisted of "blackening the edge of the eyelids both above and below the eye with a black powder called *kohl*. This is a collyrium commonly composed of the smoke black, which is produced by burning a kind of *liban*, an aromatic resin,

with paint, in vain dost thou make thyself fair; *thy* lovers despise thee, they seek thy life. For I have heard a voice ³¹ as of a woman in travail, the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that gaspeth for breath, that spreadeth her hands, *saying*, Woe is me now! for my soul fainteth before the murderers.

a species of frankincense....*Kohl* is also prepared of the smoke black produced by burning the shells of almonds....*Antimony*, it is said, was formerly used for painting the edges of the eyelids. The *kohl* is applied with a small probe of wood, ivory, or silver, tapering towards the end, but blunt; this is moistened, sometimes with rosewater, then dipped in the powder and drawn along the edges of the eyelids....The custom of thus ornamenting the eyes prevailed among both sexes in Egypt in very ancient times: this is shewn by the sculptures and paintings in the temples and tombs of this country, and *kohl*-vessels with the probes and even with remains of the black powder have often been found in the ancient tombs" (Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, I. pp. 45, 46). For the custom cp. 2 Kgs ix. 30; Ezek. xxiii. 40; also Job xlii. 14 (Kerhappuch=horn of eye paint).

thy lovers] those whose political alliance thou hast cultivated. This term, hardly applicable to the Scythians, is an example of the modifications of phrase which Jeremiah would introduce when the Babylonians, whose friendship had formerly been sought, had become the foes to be dreaded. See Intr. iv. § 3 (end).

31. Thy wiles shall have no effect; for already I hear thy cries of agony and dismay.

daughter of Zion] denoting the inhabitants as a whole. Cp. vi. 2, etc.

CH. V. 1—31. JERUSALEM IS RIPE FOR JUDGEMENT.

We may summarize the contents as follows:

1—9. Even one righteous man would procure forgiveness. But moral obliquity and obstinacy in sin are universal among the enlightened no less than the ignorant. Retribution cannot but be the result.

10—19. The people have refused to credit the forecasts of the true prophets. Therefore shall city and country alike be laid waste by a mighty nation of unknown tongue. Israel has chosen to serve foreign gods at home. Now she shall be compelled to serve foreign masters in exile.

20—29. They fear not Jehovah, who is absolute in His control of nature's forces, whether beneficent or destructive. By craft, like that of the fowler, who fills his cage with trapped birds, rich men lay up wealth at the expense of the needy and the orphan. Divine vengeance must ensue.

30, 31. Prophets teach falsely, and support priestly rule. The people welcome this state of things. What shall the end be?

5 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that
 2 seeketh ¹truth; and I will pardon her. And though they
 3 say, As the LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely. O LORD,
²do not thine eyes look upon ¹truth? thou hast stricken them, but they were not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive ³correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused
 4 to return. Then I said, Surely these are poor: they are foolish; for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the
 5 judgement of their God: I will get me unto the great men,

¹ Or, *faithfulness*

² Heb. *are not thine eyes upon,*

³ Or, *instruction*

1. *Run ye to and fro*] The prophet challenges his hearers to find a single righteous man by a thorough and extensive search. Cp. Gen. xviii. 23—33. The little good that was left in the land was driven out of sight by the prevailing wickedness, and exercised no appreciable effect upon it.

broad places] the market-places and other chief places of resort.

truth] mg. *faithfulness*, and so in v. 3; by no means confined to truth in words. The word is the same as that rendered “faithfully,” e.g. 2 Kgs xii. 15, xxii. 7. Jeremiah lays special stress on this quality, which with him “unites in itself faithfulness towards God (constancy), towards man (integrity), towards oneself (genuineness),” Co. Cp. Hos. iv. 1.

2. Though, as professed servants of Jehovah, they take the most solemn form of oath, yet they use it to give weight to a lie. Cp. Is. xlvi. 1.

surely] This rendering is obtained by the change of one letter in MT., which has “therefore” in defiance of the sense.

3. *do not thine eyes look upon, etc.*] Dost thou not look for faithfulness in men?

they have made their faces harder than a rock] Cp. Ezek. iii. 7 ff.

4. The prophet thinks, Surely it is poverty and ignorance that mislead them. Cp. Hos. iv. 6.

the way of the LORD] the way prescribed by God to man.

judgement] primarily a decision given by a judge, and hence an ordinance, or a prescribed system of ordinances (so in viii. 7). See Dr. pp. 334 f. and cp. note on x. 24. The sense here is well illustrated by 2 Kgs xvii. 26 f., where, however, “manner” in E.VV. is an inadequate rendering.

and will speak unto them; for they know the way of the LORD, and the judgement of their God. But these with one accord have broken the yoke, and burst the bands. Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, a wolf of 6 the ¹evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities, every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased. How can I pardon thee? thy 7 children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had ²fed them to the full, they committed

¹ Or, *deserts*

² Or, according to another reading, *made them swear*

5. *they know*] As experts they have leisure to study the Law, and to learn therefrom the will of God.

broken the yoke, and burst the bands] of the Law and of obedience. The bands are the fastenings of the yoke upon the neck of the beasts that bear it.

For the phrase cp. ii. 20. As oxen which have broken loose, and are straying, so have the rebellious leaders of the people cast off obedience and service.

This verse suggested images to Dante:

"A lion's aspect, which appeared to me,
He seemed as if against me he were coming
With head uplifted, and with ravenous hunger,
So that it seemed the air was afraid of him;
And a she-wolf, that with all hungerings
Seemed to be laden in her meagreness,
And many folk has caused to live forlorn!"

Inferno, Canto i. ll. 45—51. Longfellow's Trans.

6. For the danger from actual wild beasts in Palestine cp. i Sam. xvii. 34; 1 Kgs xiii. 24, xx. 36. Here the description "spoiling," "watching over" (i.e. lying in wait) shews that the passage is metaphorical. Cp. iv. 7.

evenings] *deserts*, as mg., thus preserving the parallelism with "forest." The mistake arose from the similarity of the two words in Hebrew.

leopard] *panther*.

watch over] Cp. Hos. xiii. 7.

7. If the MT. be right, the transition to Jehovah's words is an abrupt one. Du., however, considers that an abbreviation of the common formula "Thus saith Jehovah" was misunderstood and so brought about a corruption of the text. He would accordingly restore thus: *How can I pardon them, saith the LORD; they have, etc.*

I had fed them to the full] not as mg. *made them swear*, meaning, had

- adultery, and assembled themselves in troops at the harlots' houses. They were as fed horses ¹in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?
- 10 Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her branches: for they are not the LORD'S. For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.
- 12 They have denied the LORD, and said, It is not he; neither

¹ Or, *roaming at large*

bound them to me by oath. They had made use of their prosperity only as facilitating and inciting to sin. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 15.

The last part of the verse may be understood to include the sense of faithlessness to their Divine Spouse, but *v.* 8 seems clearly to indicate a reference to the impure rites which accompanied idolatry.

assembled themselves in troops] The verb in MT. suggests bands of marauders (cp. e.g. 2 Kgs v. 2). As this is an unsuitable sense here, it is better (with LXX) to read by a slight alteration in the Hebrew (where *d* and *r* are very similar letters), *made themselves sojourners* (*yithgorāru* for *yithgodādu*).

8. The Hebrew of the first clause is obscure. The reading "fed horses," which is to be preferred, represents the consonants of MT. (K'thibh), though the verb which they form is found elsewhere only in cognate languages (meaning *to feed*). The mg. of MT. (K'ri) is of uncertain signification, but probably is from a root giving a sense equivalent to the word dealt with in the next note.

in the morning] Hebrew grammar forbids this rendering, while mg. *roaming at large* connects it with a root from which it cannot, strictly speaking, be drawn. It is best, with a slight change in MT., to take it as meaning *stallions*. See Dr. p. 345.

10—19. See summary at beginning of section.

10. Judah is likened to a vineyard. So in xii. 10; Is. v. 1 ff.

her walls] This sense for the MT. as here vocalised is very questionable. It is best, changing one vowel, to take the meaning to be *vine-rows* (as probably in Job xxiv. 11). So Du., though Co. makes it to denote the walls protecting the vineyards, and Gi. (in spite of the metaphor of the context) the walls of Jerusalem.

make not a full end] See on iv. 27.

branches] *tendrils*, so as to keep up the figure of the vine. Cp. Is. xviii. 5.

12. *It is not he*] lit. *not he!* probably corresponding to our own colloquial expression, and used as a rejoinder by those who refused to credit prophetic warnings of disaster. Cp. Zeph. i. 12.

shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: and the prophets shall become wind, and the word ¹³ is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them. Where- ¹⁴ fore thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of ¹⁵ Israel, saith the LORD: it is ¹a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. Their quiver is an ¹⁶ open sepulchre, they are all mighty men. And they shall ¹⁷

¹ Or, *an enduring nation*

13. *and the prophets shall become wind*] the rejoinder continued. As the word is generally used in Jeremiah of the false prophets, Gi. takes it in that sense here, but he is obliged for that purpose to transpose vv. 13, 14 and attribute the words to God.

shall it] rather, *may it*. "The Lord do so to you also," is the people's imprecation on the prophets who rebuke them. Codex A (Alexandrian) of LXX omits the words, but this may have been done by the translators themselves or by a copyist, as thinking it too much to the national discredit that a formula of cursing should have been used towards the prophets. The metre of the v. is, however, the better for their absence, and, as Co. says, they may well have been added as a gloss, under the erroneous impression that the reference was to *false* prophets. Du., for metrical reasons, transfers the clause to v. 14, and places it in Jehovah's mouth, inserting it after "this word."

14. "Ye" (the people)—"thy" (Jeremiah's). Cp. xxiii. 29.

15. Although the description suits the Babylonians (cp. Is. v. 26 of the Assyrians; also Is. xxviii. 11, xxxiii. 19), we need not suppose that it is altered in phraseology from its original application which was doubtless to the Scythians (see Intr. i. § 3). "Jeremiah may well have thought of the Scythians as a *primaeval* people like the Nephilim." Pe.

The LXX shew a considerable amount of omission and variation as compared with MT., but there is hardly sufficient ground for doubting the trustworthiness of the latter.

mighty] The word in MT. is primarily used of a stream which flows continuously. Hence, mg. *enduring*, imperishable. Cp. Am. v. 24 mg. "overflowing."

whose language thou knowest not] Cp. Deut. xxviii. 49. Appeals for mercy would be fruitless when made in a tongue not understood by the stranger.

16. *Their quiver is an open sepulchre*] Their arrows are deadly. Cp. Ps. v. 9.

eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall ¹beat down thy fenced cities, wherein thou
 18 trustest, with the sword. But even in those days, saith
 19 the LORD, I will not make a full end with you. And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD our God done all these things unto us? then shalt thou say unto them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.

20 Declare ye this in the house of Jacob, and publish it
 21 in Judah, saying, Hear now this, O foolish people, and

¹ Or, *impoverish*

Their quiver] Cp. iv. 29 ("bowmen").

17. *which thy sons and thy daughters should eat*] This is the rendering which the Heb. on the whole suggests, though the meaning *may* be, *they shall eat thy sons and thy daughters*. Seeing, however, that cannibalism is not to be attributed to the Scythians, it is probable that the clause is either metaphorical (cp. iii. 24) or has been inserted through the influence of the closely connected passage, Deut. xxviii. 49—53, where, however, it is the besieged who are driven to this resort. *shall beat down*] not, as mg. *impoverish*.

18. Du. for metre and style excludes the whole remainder of the ch. from Jeremiah's authorship. Without such drastic treatment of the text, we may yet hesitate to accept this *v.* as it seems an unwarranted interruption of the sequence of thought. See on iv. 27.

19. The punishment was to be severe, because the wickedness which had called it forth was gross.

in a land that is not yours] Referring to the approach of exile, and therefore belonging to the time of the Roll (B.C. 604). Cp. xvi. 10—13, xxii. 8 f.; Deut. xxix. 24 ff.; 1 Kgs ix. 8 f.

20—29. See summary at beginning of section.

20—22. These *vv.* are in whole or in part rejected as a later addition by Stade, Du., Co., Gi., because (i) "declare" and "publish" are in the plural, which is unusual (but see iv. 16); (ii) the illustration of Jehovah's greatness by the phenomena of nature belongs to the later period, cp. Job xxxviii. 8—11 (but see Am. iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6); (iii) they resemble the suspicious passages xxxi. 35 ff., xxxii. 17 ff.; (iv) there is a needless embellishment of style. These reasons, however, seem insufficient to warrant the rejection of the whole. Moreover (unless we accept Du.'s view, see note on *v.* 18), to omit them, and thus join *v.* 23 immediately to *v.* 19, involves injury to the sequence of thought. This is obviated by the retention of the first part of *v.* 21, and of *v.* 22 to "my

without ¹understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: Fear ye not me? saith the ²² LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, ²by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it? and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it. But this people hath a ²³ revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the ²⁴ LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in its season; that reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away ²⁵ these things, and your sins have withholden good from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they watch, ²⁶ as fowlers lie in wait; they set a trap, they catch men. As ²⁷

¹ Heb. *heart*.

² Or, *an everlasting ordinance, which it cannot pass*

presence." So Co. Verse 20 is in any case probably an addition, as there is no parallel in Jeremiah for this kind of introduction to an utterance.

21. *understanding*] mg. Heb. *heart*, which was considered as the seat of intelligence. See xxiv. 7 ("an heart to know me"); Hos. vii. 11 (mg.).

22. In MT. "the waves" belongs to the next clause. No subject is supplied to "toss themselves," but xlv. 7 f. suggests that *the waters thereof* (which form one word in Hebrew) should be supplied as accidentally omitted.

23. The people are rebellious, even as inanimate nature sometimes is. But Jehovah can control both.

24. God's *grace* as shewn in nature illustrated. As the people refused to fear Him in consideration of His power (v. 22), so neither does His bounty prevail with them.

rain, both the former and the latter] Cp. iii. 3. The former (= early) rain was between October and December, the latter fell in March and April.

25. *these things*] the blessings mentioned. For the thought cp. Am. iv. 6 ff.

26. *are found wicked men*] men of such great wickedness as to infect all.

set a trap] lit. *a destroyer*. For an illustration of a bird-trap see on Am. iii. 5 (C.B.). These men stealthily attack the poor and honest. Cp. Is. xxix. 21; Mic. vii. 2.

they catch men] They by their wiles do as Nimrod is supposed by

a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass in deeds of wickedness: they plead not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, that they should prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

¹A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule ²by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

¹ Or, *Astonishment and horror*

² Or, *at their hands*

ancient commentators to have done by force. The Targ. on Gen. x. 9 speaks of him as "a hunter of the sons of men."

27. *cage*] The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere only in Amos (viii. 1), "a basket of summer fruit." Here, however, Cheyne (*Pulpit Comm.*, *ad loc.*), quoting Hitzig, thinks that "the cage was at the same time a trap." He quotes Ecclus. xi. 30 (see note in C.B.), "As a decoy partridge in a cage," where the Greek word used is that with which LXX render "baskets" in Jer. vi. 9.

deceit] riches won by craft, as birds by the fowler.

28. *waxen fat*] Fatness was looked on as a mark of prosperity. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 15; Ps. xcii. 14; Prov. xxviii. 25.

shine] referring to their sleekness of skin.

that they should prosper] i.e. that the orphans by their help may receive succour.

29. The refrain taken up again from v. 9.

30, 31. See introd. summary to section. Leaders and people unite in disaffection.

30. *wonderful*] **appalling**. The word properly means desolation, destruction.

31. "When Amos and Isaiah attacked the priesthood of Judah, they still felt that there remained the Prophets on whom the nation could fall back. But when Jeremiah mourned for Israel, he felt that there was no reserve in Judah. And when the Priesthood closed in hostile array around him, he felt that, as far as Jerusalem was concerned, the Prophets were no supporters." (Stanley, *J. Ch.*, II. 441.)

bear rule] possibly, reading a somewhat similar verbal form from the root whence Torah comes, *teach*, this being an important function of the priests. Cp. xiii. 18; Ezek. vii. 26; Hag. ii. 11; Mal. ii. 7. Du.'s rendering (from a rare root of the same consonants, meaning *to scrape*), "put money into their pockets," is hardly to be accepted.

by their means] as mg. **at their hands**, under their guidance, at

Flee for safety, ye children of Benjamin, out of the 6 midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and raise up a signal on Beth-haccherem: for evil looketh forth

their pleasure. So Gi. Cp. for this sense 1 Chr. xxv. 3; 2 Chr. xxiii. 18; Ezra iii. 10, "after the order of."

CH. VI. 1—30. THE DOOM.

In this chapter Jeremiah continues to give warning of the Scythians' approach, and furnishes the people with a lively representation of the troubles that were at hand. It will not now suffice, in accordance with iv. 5 ff., to flee to walled towns. Zion itself will be captured. This modification suggests either that this ch. belongs to a somewhat later date than the earlier passage, or that it was altered to suit the circumstances of Jehoiakim's reign. The ch. falls into four divisions, each, after the first, beginning with the words, "Thus saith the Lord." The first (1—8) depicts the approach of the enemy and the preparations for a siege; the second (9—15) describes the capture of the city whose wickedness the prophet denounces; the third (16—21) declares that the formal offerings made to God shall not help them in the day of their trouble; the fourth (22—30) sets out the cruelty with which the enemy shall treat them.

1. *ye children of Benjamin*] Jeremiah was himself a Benjamite (ch. i. 1), and Jerusalem was in Benjamin, the boundary between that tribe and Judah lying in the valley of Hinnom, to the south of the city.

and blow...Beth-haccherem] these two clauses interrupt the *Kinah* measure, and break into the context which deals with Jerusalem only. Hence Du. and Co. (not so Gi.) consider them a later insertion. "Blow the trumpet" and the proper name Tekoa involve a play on words in the Heb. (*tik'û, tēkoa'*). Tekoa (*Tekû'a*) is about twelve miles S. of Jerusalem, on a hill forming part of the range which stretches from Hebron towards the Dead Sea. St Jerome writing in Palestine speaks of it as daily before his eyes. It was the birthplace of Amos (Am. i. 1), and it or its inhabitants are mentioned on several other occasions. The ruins which are found there, however, are probably all of Christian times. It is in the direction which would be naturally taken by the inhabitants in the event of flight before an invading host from the north.

a signal] Though the Hebrew word has no necessary reference to fire, a word (*Massû'ah*) closely connected with this one is used in later Hebrew to denote the fire lighted to give notice of the appearance of the new moon. The word used here occurs in Judges xx. 38, 40, to denote a pillar of smoke agreed upon as a signal. In this clause also a play on words seems intended between the imperative and its object.

Beth-haccherem] (House of the vineyard) mentioned elsewhere only in Neh. iii. 14, and to be identified in position with a conical-shaped

2 from the north, and a great destruction. The comely and
 3 delicate one, the daughter of Zion, will I cut off. Shep-
 herds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall
 pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed
 4 every one in his place. ¹ Prepare ye war against her; arise,
 and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day
 declineth, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.
 5 Arise, and let us go up by night, and let us destroy her
 6 palaces. For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye

¹ Heb. *Sanctify*.

hill called the Frank mountain, between Bethlehem and Tekoa, so named as having been used for military purposes in the Crusades; a very suitable spot for a beacon station.

2. *The comely...cut off*] So the MT., but it is open to suspicion, and the Versions differ much from it. With some emendation the sense may be that Zion is compared to a pasturage, upon which shepherds bring their flocks to feed, the latter denoting the enemy carrying with them devastation.

The comely and delicate one] better, **the pasturage, yea, the luxuriant one.**

3. For shepherds in the sense of leaders, rulers cp. chs. ii. 8, iii. 15. *every one in his place*] The Heb. is lit. *each his hand*. They shall not need to encroach upon one another, finding abundance in their own portion.

4. *Prepare*] lit. as mg. **Sanctify**. Cp. li. 27 f.; so Is. xiii. 3, "my consecrated ones," said of the armies summoned to destroy Babylon. The entering upon war was looked upon as a solemn religious act, and was accompanied by corresponding ceremonies. See Deut. xx. 2 ff., and cp. Ezek. xxi. 21 ff.

at noon] Cp. xv. 8, xx. 16; Zeph. ii. 4. The enemy in their eagerness are prepared to brave the full power of the sun's rays. But the time has slipped by. The shadows lengthen.

5. The impatience of the soldiers at the delay takes the form of a demand for a night assault. Cp. Is. xv. 1.

palaces] LXX here and often translate by θεμέλια, *foundations*, though varying much elsewhere in the rendering of the word, and significantly avoiding "palaces." See Article by Mr P. J. Heywood (*J. Th. S.* XIII. pp. 66 ff.), who suggests that the word denoted primarily the general outline or ground plan as formed by the ramification of streets and buildings, and that the main reference of the word is to the streets and lanes, rather than to higher erections. See his discussion of numerous passages. In ix. 21 he renders accordingly "*lanes* (or *quarters*)." In xvii. 27 and xlix. 27, though "palaces" is not an unsuitable sense for the context, LXX have ἀμφοδα, apparently the houses with the streets round about them.

down ¹trees, and cast up a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. As a well ²casteth forth her waters, so she ⁷
²casteth forth her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is sickness and wounds. Be ⁸
 thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul be alienated from thee; lest I make thee a desolation, a land not inhabited.

¹ Or, as otherwise read, *her trees*

² Or, *keepeth fresh*

6—8. The Scythians would not make their approaches to the city in this fashion, while the absence of metre makes us hesitate to take the passage as inserted by the prophet in Jehoiakim's time, when the Chaldeans were the enemy expected. Hence it may be of later date.

6. *Hew ye down trees*] See Deut. xx. 20.

trees] mg. *her* (the city's) *trees*.

cast up a mount] Earth was carried in baskets, and poured in a heap, until it was on a level with the walls. The assault was then made. Cp. 2 Kgs xix. 32; Is. xxix. 3; also Herodotus (l. 162), describing the campaign of Harpagus, a general of Cyrus, in Ionia.

the city to be visited] The expression comes in awkwardly, and MT. is very possibly corrupt. The LXX (reading differently two letters of the Hebrew verb, and so making it lit. *the lie*), renders, probably rightly, and with the support of Aquila's Greek Version, *O false city!*

7. The cherished wickedness of the people is illustrated by a metaphor.

a well casteth forth] MT. has two readings, *well* and *fountain*. In the former water is stored to keep it fresh, in the latter it springs out of the ground. In this application accordingly Jeremiah will mean either (a) that sin is an alien thing which has been introduced into the heart as a supply upon which to draw, or (b) that it is innate there. That he held the latter view might seem to draw support from xiii. 23, which however is not conclusive (see note there), and the former is to be preferred. It has the support of the LXX, who also agree with the mg. "keepeth fresh," thus deriving the Hebrew form from a verb quite different in sense but akin in letters to the rare one in MT., which, though found elsewhere (2 Kgs xix. 24; Is. xxxvii. 25) only in the sense of *digging for water*, yet according to Rabbinic interpretation bears also the meaning given in E.VV.

sickness and wounds] disease produced by want, and deeds of violence.

8. *instructed*] rather, *disciplined, corrected*. Cp. ii. 30, v. 3.

lest my soul be alienated] The verb in the original is much stronger, **be wrenched**. In Gen. xxxii. 25 (Heb. 26) the same verb is rendered "was strained."

9 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn again thine
 10 hand as a grapegatherer ¹into the baskets. To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is become unto them a reproach; they
 11 have no delight in it. Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: pour it out upon the children in the street, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be
 12 taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned unto others, their fields and their wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the
 13 inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even

¹ Or, *upon the shoots*

9—15. See introd. note to ch. The gleaners shall go over and over again. Calamity shall not visit the land once only, as it has already visited the Northern tribes, but many times.

9. *turn again thine hand*] addressed to the leader of the attack upon the land. Du. and Co., omitting for metrical reasons "They shall... Israel," consider that the prophet is bidden to search whether any good grapes are yet concealed under the leaves. Cp. Gen. xviii. 32. In this case *v. 10* gives the result of the search as vain.

into the baskets] better (with mg.) **upon the shoots**. So Gi. and others, taking MT. as another form of a word used Is. xviii. 5.

10. *their ear is uncircumcised*] dedicated not to God's service, but to profane uses only. Cp. Acts vii. 51; so of the lips, Ex. vi. 12, 30.

11. *Therefore*] **But**.

the fury of the LORD] The wrath which He feels has been infused into me His prophet, that I may make it known to men.

pour it out] LXX (so A.V.) have *I will pour*, etc. The imperative of MT. is best taken not as a prayer by Jeremiah but as God's command to the prophet. It is, however, harsh. The declaration is made without distinction of age, because the approaching punishment includes all alike. Five periods of life are mentioned.

in the street] at play. Cp. Zech. viii. 5.

12—15. These verses are almost identical with ch. viii. 10—12, where they are probably a later insertion.

12. *I will stretch out my hand*] Cp. for this phrase Is. v. 25.

13. *from the least of them even unto the greatest*] Cp. v. 5.

unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have ¹⁴ healed also the ¹hurt of ²my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. ³Were they ashamed ¹⁵ when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall ⁴be cast down, saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways and see, ¹⁶ and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk *therein*. And I set watchmen over you, ¹⁷

¹ Or, *breach* ² Another reading is, *the daughter of my people*, as in ch. viii. 11, 21. ³ Or, *They shall be put to shame because they have committed abomination: yea, they are not &c.* ⁴ Or, *stumble*

14. *of my people*] Cp. viii. 11, 21, which have the daughter of. Hence it has been inserted needlessly here in mg.

lightly] LXX excellently, *making nothing of it*. As worthless surgeons the religious leaders refuse to examine or probe the wounds of those who are under their charge, and for the sake of their own ease assure their patients that all is well.

15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?*] **They shall be put to shame, because they have committed abomination** (so mg.). This part of the verse is made interrogative in the English in order to avoid the difficulty which the seeming contradiction contained in the following words produces. Co. and Du., however, omit the *v.*, as failing both in metre and in harmony with its context.

nay, they were not at all ashamed] **yea, they are not**, etc.
among them that fall] They shall not escape, when their countrymen whom they have led astray suffer.

be cast down] better, as mg., *stumble*.

16-21. The third division. See introd. note to the ch.

16. *saith*] rather, **said**, in His frequent remonstrances.

Of the branching paths the old established one will prove that which alone ye may follow with divine sanction.

the good way] lit. *the way of that which is good*. Cp. xviii. 15; Deut. xxxiii. 7.

rest for your souls] The words have not the significance which the similar expression bears in Matt. xi. 29. It is "not the inward peace which the soul has in fellowship with God, but the peace and safety which they will secure by adherence to God's commands." Pe.

17. *I set*] "**I ever raised up**," Dr. See on *v.* 16.

watchmen] the prophets; so Ezek. iii. 17, xxxiii. 7.

saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet; but they
 18 said, We will not harken. Therefore hear, ye nations,
 19 and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear,
 O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even
 the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened
 unto my words; and as for my law, they have rejected it.
 20 To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from
 Sheba, and the sweet ¹cane from a far country? your burnt
 offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing
 21 unto me. Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will
 lay stumblingblocks before this people: and the fathers and
 the sons together shall stumble against them; the neigh-
 bour and his friend shall perish.

¹ Or, *calamus*

the sound of the trumpet] Cp. v. 1; Amos iii. 6.

18. The Gentiles are summoned to witness the punishment. Cp. iv. 16.

O congregation] The Hebrew word is elsewhere confined to Jews, an application which the parallelism with "nations" here forbids. Moreover, the obscurity of the expression, "what is among them," suggests a corruption of MT. Perhaps we should read *and take good knowledge of that which is coming*. So Dr.

19. The conclusion of the threefold appeal. Thus God pledges Himself as it were in the sight of the whole world, that He will no longer forbear.

the fruit of their thoughts] the results of their rebelliousness. Cp. Prov. i. 31.

my law] See on viii. 8.

20. For the uselessness of ceremonial without obedience, cp. Is. i. 11; Hos. vi. 6; Am. v. 21 ff.; Mic. vi. 6; Ps. l. 13 f.

frankincense from Sheba] Cp. Is. lx. 6, and "*Centumque Sabaeo Ture calent arae*" (*Aen.* i. 416—7). The word occurs only in the later portions of O.T., viz. xvii. 26, xli. 5 (in vii. 9 and xliv. 21 the word is different); Ex. xxx. 34; Lev. ii. 1 and six times besides; Num. v. 15 (all P), Is. xliii. 23, lx. 6, lxvi. 3; 1 Chr. ix. 29; Ca. iii. 6, iv. 6, 14.

cane] mg. *calamus* (Ex. xxx. 23; Ezek. xxvii. 19; Ca. iv. 14). It was used as an ingredient in the making of incense, and probably the "far country" was India. Du. and Co. think that Jeremiah is not attacking the sacrificial system, but the new-fangled ritual fashions. But this involves the precarious assumption that the latter part of the v. is the work of a supplementer.

21. *stumblingblocks*] The enemy shall trip them up in their easy-going ways. Cp. v. 15.

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from 22
the north country; and a great nation shall be stirred up
from the uttermost parts of the earth. They lay hold on 23
bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their
voice roareth like the sea, and they ride upon horses; every
one set in array, as a man to the battle, against thee, O
daughter of Zion. We have heard the fame thereof; our 24
hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, *and*
pangs as of a woman in travail. Go not forth into the 25
field, nor walk by the way; for *there is* the sword of the
enemy, *and* terror on every side. O daughter of my 26
people, gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in
ashes: make thee mourning, as for an only son, most bitter
lamentation; for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.
I have made thee a ¹tower *and* a fortress among my people; 27

¹ Or, *trier*

22—30. The last of the four divisions. See introd. note to the ch.

22. *from the north country*] The reference, originally at any rate, was to the Scythians. See on i. 14.

23, 24. A large part of ch. I. reads as an expansion of these *vv.*

23. *set in array, as a man to the battle*] **equipped as a man for war.**

24. Jeremiah is here the mouthpiece of his fellow-countrymen on the arrival of the news.

fame] i.e. *report*.

wax feeble] lit. *sink down*. Cp. Is. v. 24.

25. *and terror on every side*] Omit “and.” The remaining words are a characteristic expression of Jeremiah. Ch. xx. 3 (where see note), 10, xlv. 5, xlix. 29; Ps. xxxi. 13; cp. Job xviii. 11.

26. *daughter of my people*] collective, as in iv. 11.

wallow thyself in] more probably, *sprinkle thyself with* (so LXX), though the meaning of the Hebrew root is doubtful in all its occurrences (xxv. 34; Ezek. xxvii. 30; Mic. i. 10).

as for an only son] The importance attributed by the Jews to the possession of children involved special anguish when there was no one left to perpetuate the family. Cp. xxii. 30; Am. viii. 10; Zech. xii. 10.

27—30. In these *vv.* the LORD reassures Jeremiah of his divine commission, and he appears under the figure of one testing metal. The result of the testing process is that no precious metal is found. All is dross.

27. *a tower*] rather, as mg., *a trier*. It was owing to a difficulty presented by the following substantives that this was rendered *tower*. *a fortress*] The same word (with slight difference in vocalisation)

28 that thou mayest know and try their way. They are all grievous revolvers, going about with slanders; they are
 29 brass and iron: they all of them deal corruptly. The bellows blow fiercely; the lead is consumed of the fire: in vain do they go on refining; for the wicked are not
 30 plucked away. Refuse silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

7 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

¹ Or, *are burned*

has the sense of "tower" in Is. xxiii. 13. Hence probably, and with a reference to i. 18, the word "fortress" got into the MT. It is quite foreign to the context. If retained, it must be pointed otherwise, but the meaning which must then be given it, viz. *gold-washer*, or *gold-extractor*, has no valid support.

28. *grievous revolvers*] Heb. *revolvers of revolvers*, one of the ways of expressing the superlative. Cp. Gen. ix. 25; Ezek. xxxii. 21 (see note in C. B.).

they are brass and iron] an awkward expression in this place, and perhaps a later insertion, suggested by Ezek. xxii. 18—22.

29. The figure from refining metals is continued from v. 27. "In refining, the alloy containing the gold or silver is mixed with lead, and fused in a furnace on a vessel of earth or bone-ash: a current of air is turned upon the molten mass (not upon the *fire*); the lead then oxidizes, and acting as a flux, carries away the alloy, leaving the gold or silver pure (I. Napier, *The Ancient Workers in Metal*, 1856, pp. 20, 23). In the case here imagined by the prophet, so inextricably is the alloy mixed with the silver, that, though the bellows blow, and the lead is oxidised by the heat, no purification is effected; only impure silver remains." Dr. p. 39.

30. *Refuse...rejected*] There is a play on the words in the Hebrew. *Refuse—refused*.

CHS. VII.—X. ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JEREMIAH AT THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

The first question to be answered in regard to these chapters as a whole is the date to which they are to be referred, whether to the reign of Josiah or Jehoiakim. This seems to be answered by ch. xxvi., for while its vv. 1—6 have a marked resemblance to these, it is expressly stated (v. 1) to have been delivered in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (B.C. 608—7). Others (e.g. Wellhausen and Marti) place it as early as the crisis brought about by the death of Josiah at Megiddo (B.C. 608), but accepting the date in xxvi. 1, we may conclude that the two are respectively a longer and shorter summary of the same discourse, while the latter adds (xxvi. 7—24) the danger which resulted to the

Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim 2

prophet and his rescue. The announcement that the fate of the Temple should be that which had befallen Shiloh (vii. 8 ff., xxvi. 4 ff.), while helping to identify the two discourses, accounts sufficiently for their hostile reception. Irregularities in metre or its absence in vii. 4—viii. 3, compel Du. with his rigid metrical theories to make most of this section to be post-Jeremianic, while he also holds that there are considerable interpolations in the whole section. As Co. points out, however, we can hardly suppose that Jeremiah *spoke*, as well as wrote, in metre, and we may well have here in substance his oral prophecy, not yet put into metrical form. It accords with the later date that (a) Jeremiah seems to be now dwelling not at Anathoth but at Jerusalem, since he is told not as in ii. 2 to "go and cry," etc. but simply (vii. 2) to "stand in the gate of the LORD's house," etc.; (b) idolatry is represented as practised openly in the streets of Jerusalem (vii. 17 f.) and in the Temple itself (vii. 30); (c) children are burned in the valley of Topheth in honour of Molech (vii. 31).

The discourse has five natural divisions. (a) vii. 1—viii. 3, Denunciation for shameless idolatry and pollution of the very Temple. (b) viii. 4—ix. 1, Forecast of punishment as the result of sin. (c) ix. 2—26, Judah's corruption described. Her consequent sufferings. The recognition of Jehovah alone secures the weal of any nation. (d) x. 1—16, The folly of idolatry. (e) x. 17—25, Exile is at hand. Appeal to Jehovah even in punishing to remember mercy.

CHS. VII. 1—VIII. 3. CONTRAST BETWEEN REAL AND FALSE
 GROUNDS FOR CONFIDENCE. WARNING OF APPROACHING JUDGE-
 MENTS.

This section may be broken up as follows. (i) vv. 1, 2. Introduction. (ii) vv. 3—7. The guarantee for Judah's security is not, as she imagines, the existence of the Temple, but loyalty to Jehovah. (iii) vv. 8—11. Can it be that occasional worship of Him in the intervals of profligacy suffices to give them a sense of security? (iv) vv. 12—15. Let them take warning from the fate of Shiloh and the northern kingdom. (v) vv. 16—20. The people are past interceding for: their idolatry is too gross. (vi) vv. 21—28. They have never realised that from the first God's demands were not for sacrifices but for holiness of life. (vii) vv. 29—viii. 3. Topheth, the scene of idolatrous excesses, shall also be that of terrible retribution.

1, 2. Absence from the LXX of all but "Hear...ye of Judah" suggests the probability that the rest has been supplied by an editor from ch. xxvi.

2. *the gate*] In xxvi. 2 "the court" (perhaps the "new gate" of xxxvi. 10), probably between the inner and outer court, in the latter of which the crowd from city and country would assemble on a fast day or festival. The sympathy of numbers would naturally provoke the attack which followed (xxvi. 7 ff.).

there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even for evermore. Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk

3. *your ways and your doings*] a frequent expression in this Book. See Intr. iii. § 14 (b) note. Cp. Ezek. xiv. 22 f., xx. 43, xxxvi. 17; Zech. i. 4, 6.

4. *lying words*] those of the false prophets, who maintained that the possession of the Temple was enough. Jehovah would never suffer it to be overthrown, and thus its presence would be a kind of charm or fetish. They doubtless relied on such passages as Is. xxxvii. 22 ff., with the signal overthrow of Assyria that followed, as well as on the sentiment produced by the centralisation of worship at Jerusalem under Josiah.

The temple of the LORD] Cp. for the threefold repetition xxii. 29; Is. vi. 3. Here it seems intended as a charm. Cp. 1 Kgs xviii. 26 as illustrated by Mussulman Dervishes at the present day. See Stanley, *J. Ch.* II. 254, 438.

these] the buildings of the Temple.

6. *if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*] The foreigner, temporarily resident, as having no legal status, specially needed commendation to the kindness of those around him. Harshness to such was strongly denounced in the "Book of the Covenant" (Ex. xxi.—xxiii, e.g. xxii. 21, xxiii. 9) and Deut. (e.g. xxiv. 17).

8—11. See introd. note on the section.

8. *that cannot profit*] Or perhaps, *so that ye profit not*.

9. *Will ye steal*] **What! steal**, etc. The Hebrew verb is in a form used when the object is to present the action itself in the strongest light. Cp. xxxii. 33; Is. xxi. 5. The wording shews that the Decalogue is in the prophet's mind.

burn incense] See on i. 16. The Hebrew word has no connexion

after other gods whom ye have not known, and come to
and stand before me in this house, 'which is called by my
name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these
abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, 11
become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I,
have seen it, saith the LORD. But go ye now unto my 12
place which was in Shiloh, where I caused my name to
dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wicked-
ness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done 13
all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you,
rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I
called you, but ye answered not: therefore will I do unto 14
the house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust,
and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers,
as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my 15
sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole
seed of Ephraim.

¹ Heb. *whereupon my name is called*.

with that for frankincense (vi. 20), but denotes something producing a sweet smoke, whether sacrifices (as in Ps. lxvi. 15) or incense (as Ex. xxx. 7 f.).

Baal] the Baal. See on ii. 8.

10. *called by my name*] in token of ownership. Cp. xiv. 9, xxv. 29, xxxii. 34. See other references for the phrase in Dr.'s note.

We are delivered] We are guaranteed impunity by the discharge of this religious formality. It is best with R.V. to limit the people's supposed utterance to these three words, and to make the clause that follows to be the prophet's indignant and sarcastic retort.

11. *den of robbers*] a place of retreat in the intervals between acts of violence. Caves in Palestine were often used thus. This *v.* is alluded to in Matt. xxi. 13, and the parallel passages (Mark xi. 17 and Luke xix. 46).

12—15. See introd. note on the section.

12. The central position of Shiloh (*Seilân*) in Ephraim is clearly set forth in Judg. xxi. 19. It was the resting-place of the Ark till it was carried off in the battle of Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv. 11). The destruction referred to here (and in xxvi. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 60) probably followed upon that Philistine victory. At any rate thenceforward Shiloh was a place of insignificance. In Jeremiah's time it existed as a village (ch. xli. 5).

15. *I will cast you out of my sight*] Observe that exile as the punishment is already foreshadowed, while in the latter words we may trace an allusion to the popular feeling (cp. Jud. xi. 24; 1 Sam. xxvi. 19) that Jehovah's protection did not extend beyond Palestine.

Ephraim] as representing all the northern tribes.

16 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up
cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me:
17 for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what they do in
18 the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The
children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and
the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen
of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods,
19 that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me
to anger? saith the LORD; *do they not provoke themselves,*
20 to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith
the Lord GOD: Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be
poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast,

16—20. See introd. note on the section and cp. xv. 1. It is hardly probable that this formed part of Jeremiah's address, seeing that it gives us in fact Jehovah's words to His prophet abruptly inserted, without any introductory formula. According to some commentators, e.g. Co., the kind of idolatry here spoken of was not practised as late as Jehoiakim's reign. It is mentioned, however, in xix. 13, which may belong to that date. It is true that in ch. xlv. the people ascribe their misfortunes to the neglect of it, but it is a question whether the women who there speak are not contrasting their present with *their own* past practice and not with that of a previous generation. Jeremiah's tone of hopelessness also points in the direction of the later period, rather than in that of Josiah's reforms.

16. *pray not thou*] So in ch. xiv. 7 f. when Jeremiah does intercede, the prayer is refused (v. 11), and in ch. xv. 1 even the intercession of Moses and Samuel it is declared would be of no avail, although the former had more than once interceded with success (Numb. xi. 2, xiv. 22, xvi. 22 ff.).

18. Both sexes and all ages unite in the public dishonouring of God's name by shameless idolatries.

cakes] The Hebrew word is of Assyrio-Babylonian origin, and occurs elsewhere only in xlv. 19, where see further. The cakes were either shaped, or stamped, to represent the "queen of heaven," probably to be identified, not with the moon, but with the planet Venus, the Ishtar of Babylonian worship (Co.). The cult was thence derived, and appears to have been introduced in Manasseh's reign. "The description points to its prevalence among the poorer classes, who have to collect firewood and do all the work themselves." Pe. The Mass., by a different vocalisation of the word for "queen," apparently to avoid this sense, gives *work* (meaning, however, *host*, in accordance with the Rabbinic interpretation of "work" in Gen. ii. 1 f.) *of heaven*; and so LXX here, whereas in xlv. 17 etc. they render rightly "queen."

and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add ²¹ your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them ²² in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt,

21—28. See introd. note on the section.

21. *Add your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices*] Burnt offerings were consumed whole, while of sacrifices certain portions were reserved to be eaten by the priest and the offerer. Accordingly the sense here is *either* (i) appropriate for your own use the offerings of which ye now consume the whole: I care not, for whether ye do this or not ye are breaking a higher law; *or* (ii) add one sacrifice to another. Multiply your victims *ad libitum*. They have no sanctity, as offered by your guilty hands, but are merely so much flesh.

In (i), which is the preferable explanation, the reference is to the fact that sacrifices were an occasion of feasting. Turn what ought to be your most solemn act of worship into a mere opportunity for self-indulgence.

22. The passage is of the highest importance in its bearing on the epochs at which the different parts of the Pentateuch were severally composed. It is now held to be made up from elements of very diverse dates. Careful examination has shewn that in Jeremiah's day the "Priestly Code" (P) which emphasizes and elaborates the sacrificial ritual had not been added to the earlier constituents (J and E). It is true indeed that those earlier constituents are not devoid of reference to sacrifice (see Ex. xxiii. 14—19), nor is Deut. either (e.g. xii. 5 ff., xvi. 1 ff.), but (in Peake's words) "there is a very marked difference between the attitude of the earlier Codes and the Priestly Legislation. In the latter the ritual system is of very high importance, and sacrifice fills a prominent place, in the former sacrifice holds a relatively insignificant position." See further on viii. 8 as to Jeremiah's view.

In general it may be said that obedience to the moral law always ranked first (cp. xi. 4), and sacrifices were, as is here taught, wholly worthless when offered by the immoral. Moreover, the "outward ceremonial of sacrifice is discounted, in view of the danger of dependence on it" (Buchanan Blake, *How to read the Prophets*, Part I. p. 222). For the relation between prophecy and the ritual law, see further in C. B. *Introd. to the Pentateuch*, pp. 174—181. The Jews (it may be added) read in their services this portion of the prophets as the *Haph-tarah* (2nd Lesson) in connexion with Lev. vi.—viii. (as 1st Lesson), thus supporting the view that sacrifices are but secondary. Cp. for the sentiment of the *v.* 1 Sam. xv. 22; Is. i. 11 ff.; Hos. vi. 6; Am. v. 22 ff.; Mic. vi. 6 ff.

in the day] i.e. at the period of their history.

- 23 concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.
- 25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff: they did worse than their fathers.
- 27 And thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. And thou shalt say unto them, This is the nation that hath not hearkened to the voice of the LORD their God, nor received ¹instruction: ²truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

¹ Or, *correction*

² Or, *faithfulness*

23. The nature of the compact was protection on the one hand conditional upon obedience on the other.

Hearken unto my voice] The nearest approach to these words, considered as a quotation, is Ex. xix. 5, but it corresponds closely to the general tone of Deuteronomy.

in all the way, etc.] Only once elsewhere, viz. Deut. v. 33.

24. *in their own counsels*] lit. *in counsels*. The words are best omitted (with LXX).

stubbornness] Cp. iii. 17.

25, 26. Repeated substantially in ch. xi. 7 f.

26. *made their neck stiff*] Cp. for the phrase ch. xix. 15; 2 Kgs xvii. 14; Neh. ix. 16, 17, 29; Prov. xxix. 1.

27, 28. For *And thou shalt speak...say unto them*, LXX has only *And thou shalt say unto them this word*, pointing to a probable amplification on the part of MT.

28. *the nation*] conspicuous for their disobedience. Cp. Ps. xii. 4. *truth*] mg. *faithfulness*. See on ch. v. 3.

29—viii. 3. See introd. note on the section.

The verbs and pronoun are fem. in the original, shewing that E.VV. are right in giving them a collective sense, and inserting "O Jerusalem." See on iv. 30. Polling the hair was a sign of mourning. Cp. Job i. 20; Mic. i. 16; also Deut. xiv. 1.

Cut off ¹thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast it away, and ²⁹ take up a lamentation on the bare heights; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done that which is evil in ³⁰ my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it. And ³¹ they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their

¹ Heb. *thy crown*.

29. *hair*] lit. (as mg.) *crown*, Heb. *nezer*, and used of the long hair worn in fulfilment of the *Nazirite's* vow (Num. vi. 7). Jerusalem must now shew by outward sign her faithlessness to her vows of loyalty to her God.

bare heights] See on ch. iii. 2.

30. *they have set their abominations*] as Manasseh had done (2 Kgs xxi. 5, 7).

31, 32. For a recurrence of the substance of this passage see ch. xix. 5 f., 11.

31. *high places*] read *high place*. There would not be more than one altar in Topheth. So LXX and Targ.

Topheth] This probably is not the original vocalisation (LXX Ταφῆθ), though the latter cannot be determined with certainty. As Bosheth was a frequent substitute for Baal (see on iii. 24), and as the vowels of the former word were for a similar reason given to the consonants MLK (*Melech*, king), in order that offerings which the more enlightened felt it shameful to connect with Israel's Divine King (*Melech*) might be represented as really made to a heathen god (*Molech*); so here the original form of the word Topheth is thought to have been disguised for the same purpose of discredit. The etymology of the word is doubtful. Perhaps it comes from a root appearing in Aramaic in the sense of *fire-place*. So Rob. Sm. *Rel. of the Semites*, p. 377 (1894), who points out that when the term "first appears in Hebrew, the chief foreign influence was that of Damascus" (2 Kgs xvi.). A great pit constituted the "fire-place," where the victims were consumed. See C. B. on Is. xxx. 33, where the word is from the same root, though in a slightly different form. As to the position of Topheth see next note. It was defiled by Josiah (2 Kgs xxiii. 10) as the scene of idolatrous and cruel rites.

valley of the son of Hinnom] The majority of scholars identify it with the *Wady er-Rubâbeh*, running W. and S. of Jerusalem, rather than with the Tyropoeon or the Kidron valleys. The derivation and meaning of Hinnom are unknown. Possibly it was the name of a former owner. See further on ii. 23. As to the position of Topheth in connexion with it, all that we can say with tolerable certainty is that it was near the

daughters in the fire; which I commanded not, neither
 32 came it into my ¹mind. Therefore, behold, the days come,
 saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Topheth,
 nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of
 Slaughter: for they shall bury in Topheth, ²till there be no
 33 place *to bury*. And the carcases of this people shall be
 meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the
 34 earth; and none shall fray them away. Then will I cause
 to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of
 Jerusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the

¹ Heb. *heart*.

² Or, *because there shall be no place else*

junction of the three valleys which encompass Jerusalem, and below
 Siloam. See HDB. *Hinnom, Valley of, and Topheth.*

to burn, etc.] The law laid down that firstborn alike of men and of
 cattle were dedicated to Jehovah. The firstborn of men and of unclean
 animals were to be redeemed, those of clean animals to be offered in
 sacrifice (Ex. xiii. 2, 12 f., xxii. 29, xxxiv. 19 f.; cp. Num. iii. 46 f.,
 xviii. 15 f.). The fact that neighbouring nations, Arabs, Phoenicians,
 Moabites, actually sacrificed their firstborn, together with a misinter-
 pretation of the above passages, may have led to a belief that Jehovah
 meant that this should be done, and possibly Jeremiah in viii. 8 refers
 to a *written* perversion of the law in this direction. See note there.
 According to Ezek. (xx. 25) the people were left by God in this belief
 as a judicial punishment. (Cp. for a parallel case Ezek. xiv. 9.) Ezekiel
 there traces the custom to wilderness days. As human sacrifices came
 under the category of the burnt offering, and as animals were slain
 before they were consumed, we may presume that the same was done
 in these cases. (Milton, *P.L.* i. 394 ff. takes the other view.)

which I, etc.] Mic. vi. 7 shews that in his day the question of the
 efficacy of such sacrifices was a practical one.

mind] mg. *heart*. See on ch. v. 21.

32. "Where they have butchered their children, they shall themselves
 be butchered, hence the name Valley of Slaughter will replace the older
 name." Pe.

till there be no place to bury] mg. *because there shall be no place else*,
 is the clear meaning of the MT. (and LXX agrees). But, under the
 circumstances the scene of the slaughter would be the natural place for
 burial. Possibly the MT. does not give the original form of the clause.
 Du. omits it, but it recurs in xix. 11. To be left unburied was much
 dreaded. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 26; Is. xviii. 6.

33. *fray]* *frighten*. The word is obsolete, except as a provincialism.
 It is the root of *affray* (participle, *afraid*). Cp. "he thought hir to affraye."
 Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*. (*Bible Word-Book*.)

voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride: for the land shall become a waste.

At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the 8 bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves: and they shall spread them before the sun, and 2 the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth. And 3 death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the 4

34. *the voice of the bridegroom, etc.*] Cp. xvi. 9, xxv. 10.

viii. 1. *they shall bring out*] Not, apparently, with the hope of finding spoil, treasures and ornaments of value being often buried with the dead (cp. Darius's fruitless visit to the tomb of Nitocris, Herod. i. 187), but that the objects of their former devotion might look down on the indignities to which those who had served them were subject, as a cause of painful disquiet to their shades in the unseen world.

2. *host of heaven*] Such worship was frequent, as we see from 2 Kgs xvii. 16, xxi. 3; Zeph. i. 5, in the time of the later kings. Cp. xix. 13; Ezek. viii. 16.

3. The thoughts correspond closely with Lev. xxvi. 36 ff.; Deut. xxviii. 65 ff.

family] See on iii. 14.

which remain] repeated in MT. by the error of a copyist.

CHS. VIII. 4—IX. 1. FORECAST OF PUNISHMENT AS THE RESULT OF SIN.

The section may be thus summarized.

(i) vv. 4—9. Human fortunes and conduct are as a rule liable to change, but Israel pursues a steady course of disobedience. Migratory birds obeying unerringly their instincts compare favourably with the men who have intellect to understand Jehovah's teaching, yet falsify or ignore it. (ii) vv. 10—12. Even prophets and priests are covetous, insincere, foolishly optimistic, and unblushingly wicked. They must suffer the penalty. Their wives and lands shall be given to others. (iii) vv. 13—17. They are as a tree without fruit or leaf. It remains only in despair to take refuge within walls. The northern foes' approach

LORD: Shall men fall, and not rise up again? shall one
 5 turn away, and not return? Why then is this people of
 Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they
 6 hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I hearkened and
 heard, but they spake not aright: no man repenteth him
 of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one
 1 turneth to his course, as a horse that rusheth headlong
 7 in the battle. Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her
 appointed times; and the turtle and the swallow and the
 crane observe the time of their coming; but my people
 8 know not the 2 ordinance of the LORD. How do ye say,

1 Or, *turneth away in his course*

2 Or, *judgement*

can be already heard. They devastate city and country alike. No charm can avert this serpent-like attack. (iv) *vv.* 18—ix. 1. There sounds from afar the cry of dismay from those who have moved Jehovah to anger. The time for deliverance has gone by. Is there indeed no remedy? No, none. Would that my tears were as limitless as the calamity which calls them forth.

4. We have had (chs. vii. 29—viii. 3) a kind of parenthesis, setting forth the nature of the coming punishment. Jeremiah now returns to the subject of the conduct which has procured it.

5. *slidden back...backsliding...return*] All three expressions are from the same root; "*turn back...backturning...to return.*"

6. *I*] Jeremiah or Jehovah through him.
hearkened and heard] implying an anxiety to give every chance of amendment.

turneth to] better, as mg., *turneth away in.*

rusheth headlong] lit. *overfloweth*, used figuratively of an invading army in xlvii. 2.

7. Instinct renders migratory birds punctual in departure and arrival. How much more should man's reason and conscience exercise over him an effective control. Cp. Is. i. 3.

stork] There are two species found in Palestine, the white and the black, the former dispersed generally in pairs over the whole country, the latter living in the deserts and in large flocks.

in the heaven] at the time of their migration they fly high. (See HDB. and Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, 205, 219, 246.)

turtle] There are three species of turtle dove in Palestine.

swallow] better, *swift*, or *martin*. All three are common in Palestine. The swift has a harsh cry, constantly repeated.

crane] perhaps a species of bird akin to that preceding. It may very possibly be the swallow, but no clear indication can be got from any sense of the root in Hebrew or cognate languages.

ordinance] though it is thus recognised by the lower animals.

We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? But, behold, the false pen of the scribes hath ¹wrought falsely. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: 9 lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what manner of wisdom is in them? Therefore will I give their 10 wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall possess them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. ²And they have healed 11 the hurt of the daughter of my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when 12 they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they

¹ Or, *made of it falsehood*

² See ch. vi. 14, 15.

8. *the law*] The reply of the priests such as the two Pashhurs (xx. 1, xxi. 1) and prophets such as Shemaiah (xxix. 24) was, *We do know the Law and have it in writing.*

But, behold, the false pen...falsely] or (as mg.) *hath made of it falsehood.* Jeremiah has been thought by Du., Co. and others (not so Gi.) to refer here to the newly-discovered book supposed to be in a large degree identical with Deuteronomy as we now have it (2 Kgs xxii. 8). We may indeed well believe that the prophet laid but little stress on the ritual portions of the law, there set forth (see vii. 22 with notes), as compared with the rest of the Book. But with the moral tone of that Book he was in full sympathy, as is shewn by his frequent use of its words and phrases, and persistent enforcement of its general teaching. See on xi. 1, etc. Thus it is far more likely that he here refers to the traditional directions, already committed to writing, which the priesthood claimed to possess for guidance in ritual. These had been perverted in some way to us unknown, so as to sanction iniquitous observances. This was "a peril specially likely to arise, when but few copies of 'the law' existed, and when the authority of the written law was not fully recognised," Ryle, *Canon of the O.T.*, p. 67. Cp. ii. 8; Zeph. iii. 4; see also Deut. xxiv. 8 ("teach," i.e. give directions for action); Hag. ii. 11 ff. The Hebrew word for "law" means literally *pointing out, direction*. See further in C.B. *Joel and Amos*, pp. 230 f.

scribes] a class of men who devoted themselves to the study and development of the law. See 2 Chr. xxxiv. 13. This laid the foundation for the mass of Rabbinical exposition which belonged to later times.

10—12. See summary at commencement of section. These verses are omitted by LXX and are almost identical with ch. vi. 12—15 above. See notes there.

fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation
 13 they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. I will utterly
 consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes
 on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall
 fade; and ¹*the things that* I have given them shall pass away
 14 from them. Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and
 let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us ²be silent
 there: for the LORD our God hath ³put us to silence, and
 given us water of ⁴gall to drink, because we have sinned
 15 against the LORD. We looked for peace, but no good
 16 came; and for a time of healing, and behold dismay! The
 snorting of his horses is heard from Dan: at the sound of
 the neighing of his strong ones the whole land trembleth;
 for they are come, and have devoured the land and all that
 17 is in it; the city and those that dwell therein. For, behold,

¹ Or, *I have appointed them those that shall pass over them*

² Or, *perish* ³ Or, *caused us to perish* ⁴ See Deut. xxix. 18.

13—17. See summary at commencement of section.

13. *there shall be*] better, *there are*. The people in their *present* state are likened to a lifeless vine or fig tree. We are reminded of the comparison of the righteous man, xvii. 8; Ps. i. 1 ff. The last clause can scarcely bear the sense given it either in the text or mg. (*I have appointed them those that shall pass over them*), and it is not in LXX. As it stands it is perhaps the corruption of an interpolation. There is, however, some reason for conjecturing, if it be genuine, that its original form ran, *I will not give them their produce* (i.e. the yield of the ground).

14, 15. The people in their straits address one another. Cp. iv. 5.

14. *be silent...put us to silence*] better, as mg. *perish...caused us to perish*. Cp. 1 Sam. ii. 9.

water of gall] a plant yielding some bitter flavour reminding of gall. It is mentioned also ix. 15, xxiii. 15; Deut. xxix. 18 (MT. 17), xxxii. 32; Ps. lxxix. 21; Lam. iii. 5, 19; Hos. x. 4 ("hemlock"). It cannot be identified with any certainty.

15. See on xiv. 19.

16. *Dan*] See iv. 15.

strong ones] i.e. *war-horses*. The same epithet is used as a substitute for the noun, chs. xlvii. 3 ("strong ones"), l. 11 ("strong horses"). The horse was the embodiment of strength. See Job xxxix. 19; Ps. xxxiii. 17, cxlvii. 10.

land] or, *earth*.

I will send serpents, ¹basilisks, among you, which will not be charmed; and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

Oh that I could comfort myself against sorrow! my ¹⁸ heart is faint within me. Behold, the voice of the cry of ¹⁹ the daughter of my people ²from a land that is very far off: Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her King in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? The harvest is past, the ³sum- ²⁰ mer is ended, and we are not saved. For the hurt of the ²¹ daughter of my people am I hurt: I am ⁴black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? ²²

¹ Or, *adders*

² Or, *because of*

³ Or, *ingathering of summer fruits*

⁴ Or, *mourning*

17. *basilisks*] better (mg.) *adders*, for the basilisk was only fabulous. The creature here meant cannot be identified with certainty. See conjectures in Dr., pp. 351 f. No art of the charmer will avail against the foe here figured. The serpent-charming art is still kept up in the East. It is supposed that the sharp shrill sounds which the charmers produce by their voice or an instrument are the means by which the desired result is reached. They also "repeatedly breathe strongly into the face of the serpent and occasionally blow spittle, or some medicated composition upon them." Thomson, *op. cit.* p. 154.

18—19. 1. See summary at commencement of section.

18. *Oh that I could comfort myself*] lit. *brighten* myself. The Hebrew verb occurs here only, but is found in Arabic in this sense. See further in Dr., p. 352.

19. *from* (mg. *because of*) *a land that is very far off*] There is no need to suspect the genuineness of the clause. Jeremiah is in thought anticipating the captivity, and the distressful cries of the exiles in the direction of their home.

Is not...in her?] the words of the exiles.

Why have they, etc.] This is the LORD's reply.

strange] *foreign*.

20. The harvest lasted from April to June; later came "the summer," better (mg.), *ingathering of summer fruits*. As when the harvest was bad, there remained yet hopes from the yield of grapes, figs, olives, etc., and till these hopes had failed to be realised, men did not despair; so the people had lost one chance after another, and were now without any hope. It is probably a proverbial saying applied by the prophet.

21. *the hurt*] lit. *the breach*, and so the verb that follows.

black] mg. *mourning* (as to garb). Cp. on iv. 28.

22. *balm*] For balsam (balm) as a product of Gilead, see Gen. xxxvii. 25 and cp. Gen. xliii. 11; Ezek. xxvii. 17. As, however,

is there no physician there? why then is not the ¹health of the daughter of my people ²recovered?

9 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of
2 the daughter of my people! ³Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers,
3 an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their

¹ Or, *healing*

² Or, *perfected* Heb. *gone up*.

³ Or, *Oh that I were in the wilderness, in &c.*

some doubt has been thrown on Gilead as a place producing balsam, it has been suggested (so Pe.) that the meaning is mastic tree resin, which was obtained there.

Gilead] a mountainous part of Palestine, east of the Jordan, south of Bashan, and north of Moab.

is there no physician there?] Is there no priest or prophet, who can heal the sin of Israel or apply a remedy?

the health...recovered] rather, *the fresh flesh of the daughter of my people come up* (upon her), i.e. gradually forming by cicatrisation over a wound. See Dr., p. 352.

ix. 1. Cp. xiii. 16 f. This is the climax of the prophet's lamentation, and so to be disconnected from the section that follows.

CH. IX. 2—26. JUDAH'S CORRUPTION DESCRIBED. HER CONSEQUENT SUFFERINGS. THE RECOGNITION OF JEHOVAH ALONE SECURES THE WEAL OF ANY NATION.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) *vv. 2—9.* The prophet yearns for any retreat, even of the most dreary type, if it will deliver him from the sights he must behold in the city, viz., mutual distrust, treachery, and falsehood, which vitiate even the closest kinship, and lead to rejection of Jehovah, who must punish all this wickedness. (ii) *vv. 10—16.* Disaster is set forth in detail. The land is laid waste. All vegetation and animate life have vanished. Jerusalem itself shall be sacked. Can the wise interpret this? It is because of idolatrous excesses. (iii) *vv. 17—22.* The professional mourning women are bidden to come, and words are given them in which to bewail the fallen nation. Death steals in like a thief. No place is exempt; while the young are cut off in the open. (iv) *vv. 23—26* are foreign to the context. See notes.

2. *a lodging place*] a caravanserai, hospice (khan). Shelter was all that they afforded. The most desolate spot is to the prophet's mind better than the sights which thrust themselves upon him in Jerusalem.

adulterers] See on last words of ch. ii. 20.

tongue *as it were* their bow for falsehood; and they are grown strong in the land, but not for 'truth: for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD. Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and 4 trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will go about with slanders. And they will ²deceive every one his neighbour, and will 5 not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine 6 habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will 7 melt them, and try them; for how *else* should I do, because of the daughter of my people? Their tongue is a deadly 8

² Or, *faithfulness*

² Or, *mock*

3. *falsehood*] as the arrow. For the figure cp. Ps. lxiv. 3 f.

truth] mg. *faithfulness*. See on v. 1.

4. Cp. Mic. vii. 5 f. "The mutual distrust, which had already in the time of Hezekiah broken up families and divided the nearest friends, and made a man's worst enemies those of his own household, had now reached the highest degree of intensity" (Stanley, *J. Ch.* II. 437).

will utterly supplant] The Hebrew verb emphasizes the allusion to Gen. xxvii. 36. We might render, "*Every brother is a thorough Jacob.*"

5, 6. The MT. has apparently suffered some corruption. The LXX yield a fairly good sense. Dividing the four consonants of the Hebrew word rendered "thine habitation," so as to end v. 5 with the first two, which thus yield the meaning of *turn*, and then taking the second pair, which will thus mean *oppression* (as in Ps. x. 7, lv. 11), they render the whole "they committed iniquity and ceased not to turn aside. (v. 6) Oppression on oppression and deceit on deceit, etc.," the latter pair of identical words suggesting the parallel preceding. As Gi. points out, this does not obviate the objection that the verb rendered "weary themselves" always elsewhere (e.g. Is. xvi. 12, xlvi. 13) means to do so *to no purpose*, which is unsuitable here. Hence, and for other reasons, he rejects vv. 4, 5.

5. Here, and in v. 4, the verbs had best be rendered by present tenses.

deceive] better (as mg.) *mock*.

7. *melt*] the same Hebrew word as "refining" in vi. 29, where see note, and cp. Zech. xiii. 9.

how else should] or, *how* (terribly) *will*.

because of the daughter] LXX probably rightly has *because of the evil of the daughter*, etc. Cp. vii. 12, xxxii. 32.

- arrow; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in his heart he layeth wait
 9 for him. Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?
- 10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the pastures of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none passeth through; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled, they are gone.
- 11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, a dwelling place of jackals; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation,
 12 without inhabitant. Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and *who is* he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it? wherefore is the land perished and burned up like a wilderness, so that none passeth through?
- 13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my
 14 voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the stubbornness of their own heart, and after the Baalim,

8. LXX, by a different arrangement of the words forming the second and third clauses, have *the words of their mouth are deceitful*, an improvement in symmetry, to which the original easily lends itself.

9. Here repeated from ch. v. 9, 29.

10—16. See introd. summary to the section.

10. Cp. iv. 23—26.

a lamentation] lit. a *kinah*, i.e. a composition carefully constructed in a definite rhythmical form. See Intr. p. xlix, also notes in C. B. on Am. v. 2, 16, with pp. 232 ff. there.

burned up] better, *laid waste*.

11. *jackals*] mentioned again chs. x. 22 [xiv. 6], xlix. 33 [li. 37].

12—16. Du. and Gi. consider this passage to be condemned by prosaic wording and the vagueness or absence of metre. Co. thinks it to contain Jeremianic elements, worked up later. It certainly forms a remarkable contrast to the poetical sub-section which follows.

12. *Who is the wise man*] meaning that there are none such found, with a hint at the would-be wise, the false prophets. Cp. Hos. xiv. 9, where however there is no suggestion of sarcasm.

13. *I set before them*] See e.g. Deut. iv. 8, 44.

14. *the Baalim*] See on ch. ii. 8.

which their fathers taught them: therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of ¹gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for the cunning women, that they may come: and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters. For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because ²they have cast down our dwellings. Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation. For death is come up into our windows, it

¹ See ch. viii. 14.

² Or, *our dwellings have cast us out*

15. The coming troubles are likened to wormwood and water of gall.

wormwood] a generic word for the species *Artemisia*, found chiefly in desert places. Cp. xxiii. 15; Lam. iii. 15, 19.

water of gall] See on ch. viii. 14.

17—22. See summary introducing the section.

17, 18. "There are in every city and community women exceedingly cunning in this business....When a fresh company of sympathisers comes in, these women 'make haste' to 'take up a wailing' that the newly come may the more easily unite their tears with the mourners. They know the domestic history of each person, and immediately strike up an impromptu lamentation, in which they introduce the names of their relations who have recently died, touching some tender chord in every heart." Thomson, p. 103, and see xvi. 5.

17. *cunning*] i.e. *skilled*. Cp. Gen. xxv. 27; 1 Sam. xvi. 18; 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.

19. Co. considers that the *v.* is a gloss as breaking the connexion between the summons to the wailers and the words which they are bidden to use.

have forsaken] a prophetic perfect, meaning *must forsake*. Exile is regarded as inevitable.

20. No traditional formula will suffice; Jehovah will dictate a dirge, and it shall be for universal use.

21. *is come up*] Cp. Joel ii. 9.

is entered into our palaces; to cut off the children from
 22 without, *and* the young men from the streets. Speak, Thus
 saith the LORD, The carcasses of men shall fall as dung
 upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvest-
 man, and none shall gather *them*.

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his
 wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let
 24 not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that
 glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth
 me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness,
 judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these
 25 things I delight, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come,
 saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are
 26 circumcised in *their* uncircumcision; Egypt, and Judah, and
 Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that
 have the corners *of their hair* polled, that dwell in the

palaces] See on vi. 5.

from without] Cp. Zech. viii. 5.

22. *Speak, Thus saith the LORD*] The words are not found in LXX and they break the connexion.

23—26. See summary introducing the section. Piety alone is the source of true glory. Circumcision, as the mere external mark of the covenant, of itself brings no man, Jew or otherwise, favour with God. 23, 24, and 25, 26 form two detached utterances, which have no relation to this context, and we cannot now say where they should be placed. The former is quite in agreement with other sayings of the prophet (viii. 9, xvii. 5 f., xxii. 13 ff.). It is accordingly retained as his by Gi. and Co., while Du. rejects it.

24. Quoted freely 1 Cor. i. 31; 2 Cor. x. 17.

25, 26. *circumcised in their uncircumcision*] probably meaning circumcised in body but not in heart. "Judah cannot rely on a rite which she shares with the heathen, indeed the corresponding inward circumcision is as lacking in her as in them," Pe. See on iv. 4. The statements in v. 26 are confirmed as to Egypt by Josh. v. 9 (where "reproach of Egypt" means that the Egyptians would despise them as long as they remained uncircumcised), and by Herod. II. 104. The other nations, as tracing their descent from Abraham, would naturally observe the rite; so too the Arabians, as claiming Ishmael (see Gen. xvii. 23 ff.) for ancestor. Josephus (*Ant.* I. xii. 2) also testifies as to these last. The Philistines, on the other hand, are frequently designated contemptuously as uncircumcised (e.g. 1 Sam. xiv. 6, xvii. 26).

that have the corners of their hair polled] i.e. cut off from the temples.

wilderness: for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.

Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, 10
O house of Israel: thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way 2

See also xxv. 23, xlix. 32. According to Herod. (III. 8) it had a religious significance with certain Arab tribes. Hence its prohibition in Lev. xix. 27.

the wilderness] the desert of Arabia, eastward of Palestine.

all the nations are uncircumcised] The true circumcision of the heart is as much lacking with them as with Judah.

CH. X. 1—16. THE FOLLY OF IDOLATRY.

It is now generally recognised that this passage is a later insertion, for (a) it breaks the connexion between ix. 1—22 and x. 17 ff.; while by its omission the train of thought in the former is carried on smoothly in the latter; (b) elsewhere the people have been rebuked for being already devoted to idolatry (vii. 18, 31), but here they are addressed as sincere and convinced worshippers of Jehovah, and are warned against imagining that idols are possessed of any real power, a warning which would be well adapted to the circumstances of the exiles in Babylon, surrounded as they were with its elaborate idol worship; (c) elsewhere Jeremiah's argument is, "Expect no help from vain gods; they cannot *save* you" (ii. 28, xi. 12); here the argument is, "Do not fear them, they cannot *harm* you." See LOT. p. 254. This does not indeed preclude the possibility that the passage is one which the prophet himself addressed at a later date to his brethren in captivity, and in fact it contains certain of his expressions, viz. *vain*, *vanity*, as applied to idols (vv. 3, 15), *in the time of their visitation* (v. 15). But the style generally is not that of Jeremiah, and resembles that of the second Isaiah (chs. xl.—lxvi.), so that it may at any rate be attributed to that period. The MT. is an expansion of the original form of the Hebrew. This is shewn both by the superiority in logical sequence exhibited on the whole (but see on v. 10) by the text of the LXX in the way of omission as well as change of order (see on vv. 5, 6—8, 10), and by the smoothness of metre which results from the adoption of the Greek form of text. Co. points out that we then have from v. 2 onwards a series of clauses arranged in triplets, presenting a clear and well articulated connexion of thought. So too Gi. (in *Jeremias Metrik*) with slight differences in detail. Du. shortens the passage still further. We may add that Baruch, ch. vi. (*The Epistle of Jeremy*) is partly an amplification of this passage by one who was very familiar with particulars of the idolatry as practised at Babylon.

The passage may be summarized thus. (i) vv. 1—5. Be not led away

of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven;
 3 for the nations are dismayed at them. For the ¹customs of
 the peoples are vanity: for ²one cutteth a tree out of the
 forest, the work of the hands of the workman with the axe.
 4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with
 5 nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are like
 a ³palm tree, of turned work, and speak not: they must
 needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of
 them; for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do
 6 good. There is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art

¹ Heb. *statutes*.

² Or, it is but a tree which one cutteth

³ Or, *pillar in a garden of cucumbers* See Baruch vi. 70.

by heathen beliefs. The phenomena seen in the sky have no element of divinity about them. The gods are nothing beyond the materials put together by workmen. They are speechless, and incapable of movement. They are powerless both for good and for harm. (ii) *vv.* 6—16. Jehovah is not as these. He is the supreme God, Creator of the heavens and of the world, and Wielder of the powers of nature. The peoples of the earth may well tremble before Him, who has created all things and has chosen Israel for His own.

2. *the signs of heaven*] heavenly portents, such as comets, meteors, or eclipses, an allusion to the Babylonian love of astrology.

3. *customs*] lit. as *mg. statutes*. The expression is strange in this connexion. Probably the word in MT. has suffered corruption, but no substitute commanding general acceptance has been found. It is clear, at any rate, that the reference is to idols.

one cutteth a tree] the *mg.* is to be preferred.

workman] better, *craftsman*, as Deut. xxvii. 15.

4. The idol is covered with plates of silver and gold, and secured to its place.

move] lit. *shake*. Cp. Is. xl. 20, xli. 7.

5. *palm tree, of turned work*] Substitute *mg.*, comparing, as above, Baruch vi. 70 ("scarecrow"). See introd. note for this attitude towards idols.

From "they must needs" to "do good" is placed after *v.* 9 in LXX. This suggests that these clauses have their origin in marginal glosses, to the insertion of which at different places in the text by copyists the Hebrew and the Greek bear testimony.

6—16. See summary at commencement of the ch.

6—8. Omitted, most probably rightly, by LXX. See above.

6. *There is none*] This sense can only be got by omitting the first letter in MT. The omission can, however, be justified, as it may be an accidental repetition by a scribe of the last letter of *v.* 5. Keeping

great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not 7
 fear thee, O King of the nations? for ¹to thee doth it
 appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the
 nations, and in all their royal estate, there is none like unto
 thee. But they are ²together brutish and foolish: ³the 8
 instruction of idols, it is but a stock. There is silver beaten 9
 into plates which is brought from Tarshish, and gold from
⁴Uphaz, the work of the artificer and of the hands of the
 goldsmith; blue and purple for their clothing; they are all
 the work of cunning men. But the LORD is ⁵the true God; 10
 he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath
 the earth trembleth, and the nations are not able to abide
 his indignation.

¹ Or, *it beseemeth thee*
a doctrine of vanities

² Or, *through one thing*

³ Or, *it is*

⁴ According to some ancient versions, *Ophir*.

⁵ Or, *God in truth*

the Hebrew consonants with a slight change of vowels, we get the sense
 “*Whence is any like unto thee!*” The same difficulty arises in *v.* 7.

7. *to thee doth it appertain*] rather, as mg. *it beseemeth thee*.

8. *together*] rather, *all together*, one and all.

the instruction...a stock] lit. *the instruction of idols is wood*, i.e. “is
 no better than the idol itself: idolatry is destitute of moral or spiritual
 force,” Dr. Possibly MT. needs emendation, as the expression is a
 strange one.

9. A description of the process of the making of idols out of silver
 and gold, and the robing of them in expensive garments. There is
 probably in both MT. and LXX corruption such as cannot now be fully
 disentangled. The first part of the *v.* is likely to be a gloss.

Tarshish] probably Tartessus in Spain, for the mineral products
 supplied by Tarshish to Tyre, silver, etc. (Ezek. xxvii. 12), were exactly
 those in which Spain was rich. In Strabo’s time the port had ceased
 to exist; hence the confusion as to the locality.

Uphaz] unknown, read *Ophir* (as mg.) with some texts of LXX,
 Targ., Syr. Its position is disputed, but was probably in S.E. of
 Arabia. See HDB.

blue and purple] the richness of the idols’ clothing matches that of the
 materials which compose them.

cunning] See on ix. 17.

10. LXX omit, but there is more to be said for MT. here than in
 the cases above. As *v.* 11 is clearly a gloss, *v.* 12 would be very
 abrupt without an introduction of this kind.

the true God] better (as mg.) *God in truth*.

- 11 ¹Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, ²these shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.
- 12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding hath he
- 13 stretched out the heavens: ³when he uttereth his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain, and bringeth forth the wind
- 14 out of his treasures. Every man ⁴is become brutish *and is* without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and
- 15 there is no breath in them. They are vanity, a work of

¹ This verse is in Aramaic.

² Or, *they shall...under these heavens*

³ Or, *at the sound of his giving an abundance of waters...when he causeth &c. or, he causeth &c.*

⁴ Or, *is too brutish to know*

11. The *v.* is not Hebrew, but Aramaic. Either it is a marginal note, subsequently introduced into the text, where it interrupts the connexion of *vv.* 10 and 12, or it was designed by the prophet to supply the exiles with a form of answer when solicited to share in idolatrous practices. In the former case, inasmuch as the word for "earth" appears here in two distinct (non-Hebraic) forms, both of which are found in the Assuan papyri (see Intr. i. § 17 note), it has been conjectured to be an insertion on the part of some member of the Jewish colony in Egypt.

12—16. Repeated li. 15—19.

12, 13. The creation of all things, and in particular the phenomena of the tempest, are appealed to as signs of Jehovah's supremacy.

13. *when he uttereth his voice, etc.*] The sense is plain, though the form of the Hebrew in MT. is peculiar, and hence the alternative in mg. *at the sound of his giving an abundance of waters*, continuing, *when he causeth* or (simply), *he causeth*. Thunder, torrential rain, lightning, and winds mark Jehovah's supremacy over the elements of the storm.

maketh lightnings for the rain] probably meaning, pierceth with his flash the clouds, so that they pour their contents upon the earth. For the *v.* cp. Ps. cxxxv. 7.

14. *is become brutish and is without knowledge*] or, as mg. *is too brutish to know*. MT. is open to either rendering, that of R.V. text being preferable.

is put to shame] by the contrast between Jehovah's power over the forces of nature and the impotency of the idol.

¹delusion: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like these; for he is the former ¹⁶ of all things; and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name.

Gather up ²thy wares out of the land, ³O thou that ¹⁷ abidest in the siege. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, ¹⁸

¹ Or, *mockery*

² Or, *thy bundle from the ground*

³ Or, *O inhabitant* (Heb. *inhabitrress*) *of the fortress*

15. *delusion*] rather (with mg.) *mockery*, bringing scorn upon those who trust in them. The last clause of the *v.* refers to the fate which may be expected to befall the idols when "the day of the Lord" comes. Cp. Is. ii. 12 ff.

16. The parallelism of clauses is improved by the LXX's omission (probably therefore rightly) of two words in MT. The LXX render accordingly, "For the former of all things is his inheritance."

17—25. EXILE IS AT HAND. APPEAL TO JEHOVAH IN HIS WRATH TO REMEMBER MERCY.

The utterances, interrupted by ix. 23—26, and x. 1—16, are now continued. The passage has apparently suffered both by corruption of MT. and by marginal glosses, afterwards incorporated with the text. It may be summarized thus.

(i) 17—22. The city is hidden hastily to prepare to be cast forth into exile as the result of impending siege. The country laments, as it lies waste. The inhabitants are carried captive, because of the folly of their rulers. The report of the invasion of the northern foe presages desolation.

(ii) 23—25. The prophet, pleading the weakness of man's nature, prays that there may be a mitigation of Judah's punishment, and that God's wrath may be poured instead upon heathen nations.

17, 18. Du. and Co. omit these *vv.*, Du. rejecting 20, 21 also, while Gi. omits *v.* 18. See note on it.

17. *thy wares out of the land*] the Hebrew word occurs here only, and is of doubtful meaning. This rendering connects it with the Hebrew root of Canaanite; the Canaanites being the merchants best known to the Hebrews. It seems to mean a few articles gathered together, rather than any considerable amount or burden. Hence it suggests hasty flight. The mg. *thy bundle from the ground*, derives it from a root found in Arabic and meaning, to be contracted or folded in; hence to be done up tightly. See Dr. pp. 354 f.

O thou, etc.] fem. and so collective. See on iv. 11, vii. 29.

O thou that abidest in the siege] i.e. thou who art in a besieged city. This is to be preferred to the reading in mg.

I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and
 19 will distress them, that they may ¹feel it. Woe is me for
 my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is
 20 my ²grief, and I must bear it. My tent is spoiled, and all
 my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me,
 and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any
 21 more, and to set up my curtains. For the shepherds are
 become brutish, and have not inquired of the LORD: there-
 fore they have not ³prospered, and all their flocks are
 22 scattered. The voice of a rumour, behold it cometh, and
 a great commotion out of the north country, to make the
 23 cities of Judah a desolation, a dwelling place of jackals. O

¹ Heb. *find*.

² Or, *sickness*

³ Or, *dealt wisely*

18. *sling out*] Cp. 1 Sam. xxv. 29; also Is. xxii. 18.

feel] See the mg. The clause is suspicious in form, the verb having no expressed object. It is just possible, but hardly likely, that it may be corrected (by a change of vocalisation) to "that they may be found," i.e. that disaster may overtake them. But this is a very forced sense for the expression to bear.

19. The prophet now begins a lament in the person of the nation.

my hurt] See viii. 21.

grief] lit., as mg., *sickness*. "We speak only of a *person* as being sick; Heb. speaks also of a *wound* as being sick." Dr., p. 355, where see references.

20. The land is likened to a tent overthrown and injured beyond repair.

curtains] See on iv. 20.

21. *shepherds*] See on ii. 8.

22. *jackals*] See on ix. 11.

23—25. See summary before v. 17. Stade, Du. and others (so Gi. in 1905, see his *Metrik*, p. 23) consider the passage to be the work of a supplementer. Gi. already in his Commentary (1894) surrenders v. 25, probably rightly, while vv. 23, 24 may at least be held doubtful. Co. agrees with Gi. as to v. 25, saying that, though suitable in a Maccabaeen Psalm, as he considers Ps. lxxix. to be (where the v. is identical with vv. 6, 7), Jeremiah elsewhere holds the nations to be God's servants, carrying out His punishments on Jerusalem. On the other hand even Du. admits that vv. 23, 24 may be Jeremiah's own. Accordingly Co. fitly asks whether it be not possible that the prophet, forbidden though he was by Jehovah to intercede for his sinful nation (vii. 16, xi. 14, xiv. 7), yet felt impelled here to make one final appeal for some amount of mitigation in the penalty.

23. Man's weakness is pleaded, either as compared with the Divine power, or, better, as prone to sin.

LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Q LORD, ²⁴ correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou ¹bring me to nothing. ²Pour out thy fury upon the ²⁵heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have devoured Jacob, yea, they have devoured him and consumed him, and have laid waste his ³habitation.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ¹¹ Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the ²

¹ Heb. *diminish me*.

■ See Ps. lxxix. 6, 7.

³ Or, *pasture*

it is not, etc.] lit. *it is not for man to walk and direct his steps*.

²⁴. *correct*] See on ii. 19.

with judgement] in a judicial spirit, in measure. Cp. xxx. 11, xlvi. 28.

²⁵. *yea, they have devoured him*] Plainly by an error of repetition in MT. In the Ps. (see above) the words are not found.

CHS. XI. 1—XII. 6. EXHORTATION TO OBSERVE THE DEUTERONOMIC LAW. WARNING OF COMING JUDGEMENTS IN GENERAL AND ON ANATHOTH IN PARTICULAR.

On the date of the earlier (xi. 1—8) and later part (xi. 18—xii. 6) of the section two views are held, (i) that it belongs to Jehoiakim's reign, and may best be placed between the address in the Temple courts (chs. vii. 1—ix. 22, x. 17—25) and the battle at Carchemish (B.C. 605), and (ii) that it was delivered soon after the discovery of the book generally held to be some part of our Deuteronomy, and thus in immediate connexion with Josiah's reforms (B.C. 621). In favour of (i) it is argued (*a*) that it is not certain that the reference here is to the newly discovered law book, (*b*) that Josiah's drastic measures of reform rendered such advocacy needless, (*c*) that Jeremiah was at the earlier date too young to have become a conspicuous mark for unpopularity, (*d*) that there are other indications in his prophecies that he had realised the superficial character of the reforming legislation, and thus would not feel much enthusiasm on its behalf. In favour of (ii) the following points may be noticed. (*a*) Apart from the sacrificial or priestly element, with which (see vii. 22, viii. 8) he might be in but slight sympathy, the main positions of the Deuteronomic Law, its insistence on monotheism and the love of God, its abhorrence of idolatry and of heathen abominations were precisely the matters on which he most earnestly insisted. (*b*) The earlier date supplies an explanation of his kinsmen's antagonism. Anathoth was the seat of priestly families descended from Abiathar,

3 men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man that heareth not the words of this 4 covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that

who had been dismissed from the Jerusalem priesthood in Solomon's time (1 Kgs ii. 27). These would naturally be filled with bitter indignation against one of their kin supporting reforms which, by the abolition of country sites of sacrificial worship, conferred a monopoly upon the rival descendants of Zadok concentrated in the neighbouring capital. (c) The secrecy of the plots against Jeremiah rather implies a time when he had not yet become generally unpopular, and so fits in with the reign of Josiah. The balance of probability seems to incline to the former view. See further in introd. note on vv. 18—23.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) vv. 1—5. Jeremiah is bidden to insist on the covenant made at the Exodus, on the observance of which the possession of Canaan was conditional; and the prophet solemnly assents. (ii) vv. 6—8. He is sent on a mission through the streets of Jerusalem and cities of Judah generally, solemnly to remind the people of God's demand for obedience, of their past neglect of His words, and of the penalties which ensued. (iii) 9—14. Israel, like their forefathers, have again fallen away from Jehovah and conspired to violate the covenant by their idolatrous ways; therefore Jehovah will refuse to heed their cry for deliverance from just punishment from which their gods are powerless to save them. Their idolatries are so widespread and shameless that the prophet's intercessions would be in vain. (iv) vv. 15—17. What business in the Temple have the unholy in life? Do they suppose that hypocritical service will atone for immorality? Israel is as an olive tree, once fair, but now blasted by the storm. (v) vv. 18—23. The prophet complains that, while he was innocent and unsuspecting, his kinsmen at Anathoth were secretly plotting his death. When they disclose their designs by threats, he is empowered to declare that death by sword and famine shall befall them. (vi) ch. xii, vv. 1—6. Jeremiah's appeal for a solution of the problem how it is that the wicked and treacherous live secure and prosper. He, as Jehovah knows, is innocent in heart. May destruction overtake the ungodly! Their sins have brought desolation on the land, and they boast that they will outlive the prophet, and so falsify his forecast. The Lord, replying in figurative language, asks how, if he is impatient at what he has hitherto had to undergo, he will endure the hostility of his own family. Let him not trust fair words.

3. *Cursed be the man that heareth not*] Cp. Deut. xxvii. 15—26, especially the last v.

the words of this covenant] Cp. for the expression Deut. xxix. 1, 9.

4. *in the day, etc.*] Cp. vii. 23.

I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: that I may establish the oath 5 which I swore unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then answered I, and said, Amen, O LORD.

And the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words 6 in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them. For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day 7 that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked 8 every one in the stubbornness of their evil heart: therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did them not.

And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found 9 among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are turned back to the iniquities of their 10

the iron furnace] The place where iron is smelted represents figuratively the scene of the affliction. See for the expression Deut. iv. 20; 1 Kgs viii. 51; and cp. Is. xlviii. 10.

and do them] probably introduced by mistake from v. 6.

5. *your fathers*] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as ancestors of those who entered upon the enjoyment of the land.

flowing with milk and honey] For the expression cp. xxxii. 22; Exod. iii. 8, 17, and elsewhere.

6—8. See summary at commencement of section. Gi. omits these three vv. But v. 6 is needed, in order to account for the hostility roused at Anathoth by Jeremiah's mission. vv. 7, 8 on the other hand are omitted by LXX, and may well have been inserted here from the parallel passage, vii. 23 f.

7. *rising early*] Cp. ch. vii. 13.

8. *stubbornness*] Cp. ch. iii. 17.

9—17. Judah has fallen back into apostasy. It is now clear that Josiah's reforms have had no lasting results. The passage may therefore be placed in Jehoiakim's reign.

9—14. See summary at commencement of section.

9. They have silently agreed to apostatize.

10. The Northern kingdom's apostasy and consequent punishment

forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they are gone after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I
 11 made with their fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and they shall cry unto me, but I will
 12 not hearken unto them. Then shall the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them
 13 at all in the time of their ¹trouble. For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to the ²shameful thing, even altars to burn incense
 14 unto Baal. Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me ³for their ¹trouble.
 15 ⁴What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness *with* many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? ⁵when thou doest evil, then thou

¹ Heb. *evil*. ² Heb. *shame*. See ch. iii. 24. ³ Many ancient authorities have, *in the time of*. ⁴ The text is obscure. The Sept. renders thus: *Why hath the beloved wrought abomination in my house? Shall vows and holy flesh take away from thee thy wickednesses, or shalt thou escape by these?* ⁵ Or, *when thine evil cometh*

were already of long standing. Now Judah has followed their example in faithlessness to Jehovah, and has "turned back" after an interval of well doing under Josiah's reforms.

11—13. Gi. from considerations of style makes these *vv.* the work of a later hand. The last two *vv.* much resemble ch. ii. 27 f.

14. *Therefore pray not thou*] Cp. ch. vii. 16.

15—17. See summary at commencement of section.

15. The MT. is not really intelligible. It can be approximately corrected from LXX (as in the mg.). Gi. (so Du. and Erbt), quotes Irenaeus (iv. 32), who has *adipes*, *fat pieces*, a rendering which can be obtained by a fairly easy change in the consonants of the word in MT. The Hebrew noun which he thus adopts is used several times (e.g. Lev. viii. 26) of the fat of sacrifices. The weak part of the LXX reading lies in the last clause, where, although the sense given by them is better, the rendering involves considerable change in the Hebrew.

my beloved] Judah; so ch. xii. 7.

rejoicest. The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, ¹⁶ fair with goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced ¹⁷ evil against thee, because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have wrought for themselves in provoking me to anger by offering incense unto Baal.

And the LORD gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it: ¹⁸ then thou shewedst me their doings. But I was like a ¹⁹ gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, *saying*, Let us destroy the tree with the ¹fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no

¹ Heb. *bread*.

16. Here also there are probably corruptions in MT., but R.V. gives the general sense.

called thy name] acknowledged thee to be worthy of comparison with.

green] **spreading, luxuriant.** The Hebrew word does not in itself denote colour. For the figure cp. Ps. lii. 8; Hos. xiv. 6.

tumult] lit. *roaring*, i.e. of the tempest.

17. Considered by Co., Du. and others, owing to its style, to be due to a later hand.

18—23. See summary at commencement of section, and for the date of xi. 18—xii. 6 see introd. notes on the section. The abruptness with which the mention of the plots against Jeremiah is here introduced suggests either that some introductory words have fallen out, or, better (with Co.), that we should transpose these vv. with xii. 1—6. In this way “it” and “their” of v. 18 will be explained by xii. 6, and the LORD’S warning in the latter v. will fit in with xi. 18.

19. The prophet no more expected harm from his kindred than does the pet lamb from the family with which it lives (cp. 2 Sam. xii. 3). *gentle*] A.V. “an ox” represents the Hebrew word identical in form indeed with one so rendered in Ps. cxliv. 14 (where, however, the sense is dubious), but here the meaning is *familiar*, domesticated (cp. the rendering “companion” in Ps. lv. 13). It is rendered “friends” in xiii. 21.

fruit] mg. Heb. *bread*. So the LXX read, but it is tempting to omit (with Hitzig, and Dr.) one Hebrew consonant, and so obtain the much needed improvement “sap.” Thus we shall get the meaning to be, not the words which came from Jeremiah, as fruit from a tree, but his vigorous youth.

- 20 more remembered. But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my
 21 cause. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Thou shalt not prophesy in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by
 22 our hand: therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will ¹punish them: the young men shall die by the sword;
 23 their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; and there shall be no remnant unto them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, ²even the year of their visitation.
- 12 Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet would I ³reason the cause with thee: wherefore doth

¹ Heb. *visit upon*.² Or, *in the year*³ Heb. *speak judgements*.

20. *that triest the reins and the heart*] The reins (kidneys) were held to be the seat of the feelings, the heart that of the understanding. Cp. v. 21. Du. points out that here first in the Bible it is clearly set forth that Jehovah is cognisant of men's thoughts. Cp. chs. xvii. 10 and xx. 12.

unto thee have I revealed] *upon thee have I rolled* is the rendering proposed by some. That of the E.VV. however keeps closer to the original.

22. *punish*] lit. as mg. *visit upon*.

23. *even the year*] or, as mg. *in the year*.

xii. 1—6. See summary at commencement of section. Pe. points out that this passage is very important in religious history, since it is probably the first expression we have in Hebrew literature of the problem, Why do the wicked prosper? Habakkuk, who also deals with it (i. 13 ff.), is likely to have been at the earliest a younger contemporary of Jeremiah. (See Intr. p. xxx.) Du. rejects the passage on the ground that (a) Jeremiah expected the immediate overthrow of rich and poor alike, and that the wicked are not known to have been more prosperous than the godly in his time. But these arguments are inconclusive except perhaps for the later portion of v. 3, while the larger part of the passage seems to carry with it in point of style its own credentials.

1. *Righteous art thou*] God's justice is established as the result of every enquiry into His ways. Jeremiah, while admitting this, yet asks how it can be reconciled with (i) the prosperity of the wicked, (ii) his own adversity.

plead] See on ii. 9, 29.

the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously? Thou hast planted them, ² yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins. But thou, O LORD, knowest me; thou seest me, and triest ³ mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and ¹prepare them for the day of slaughter. How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of the whole ⁴ country wither? for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our latter end. If thou hast ⁵ run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then

¹ Heb. *sanctify*.

the wicked] in this case the men of Anathoth. The general question was one which much exercised the men of the old dispensation, who had no *clear* view of any but temporal rewards and punishments. See Psalms xxxvii., xxxix., xlix., lxxiii., and the book of Job, especially ch. xxi. 7, etc.

² *planted*] The same metaphor is used of the whole nation, 2 Sam. vii. 10. The figure of a tree is worked out in the verse. They have been placed in security and have prospered throughout life. We may compare Is. xl. 24 for the same figure applied in that case to the overthrow of those who are the objects of Divine wrath.

reins] See on xi. 20.

³ The second half of the *v.* presents some difficulty. Jeremiah's personal enemies have not yet been definitely mentioned, nor, if we take Co.'s view and place this passage (see on xi. 18—23) earlier, have they been even hinted at. If, on the other hand, it refers to the wicked generally, we may question whether Jeremiah drew a distinction between their coming fortunes and those of the nation as a whole. Co. accordingly agrees so far with Du. as to omit this part of the *v.*

pull them out] a strong expression in the Hebrew. The verb is that rendered "are broken" in x. 20.

prepare] For mg. Heb. *sanctify* see on vi. 4.

⁴ This *v.*, while suiting Jeremiah's style, is quite out of harmony with the context. See further on *v.* 13.

He shall not see our latter end] He will predecease us, not we him, as he pretends. But the LXX, assuming the pronoun to refer to Jehovah, and transposing two consonants in the last Hebrew word, translate, *God shall not see our ways*. In that case cp. Ps. lxxiii. 11. Co. and so Gi. (*Metrik*) for metrical reasons omit the *v.*

⁵, ⁶. The Divine answer. God does not solve the difficulty, but warns the prophet that he will need still more patience in the future.

how canst thou contend with horses? and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how wilt thou do in the ¹pride of Jordan? For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; even they have cried aloud after thee: believe them not, though they speak ²fair words unto thee.

¹ Or, *swelling*

² Heb. *good things*.

5. *pride*] mg. *swelling*, but the text agrees better with Zech. xi. 3 ("the pride of Jordan is spoiled"). The luxuriant vegetation or jungle is meant, the haunt of lions. Cp. xlix. 19, l. 44.

6. *even they have cried aloud after thee*] Co. omits this clause, as it otherwise appears that the danger consisted of secret, not open attack. Gi. (*Metrik*) makes the whole *v.* to be an addition in which the metre is not clear.

CH. XII. 7—17. DEVASTATION OF JUDAH TO BE WROUGHT BY HOSTILE NEIGHBOURS, WHO SHALL BE PUNISHED BY EXILE UNLESS THEY SUBMIT TO THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

Jehovah in pathetic language deplores the necessity of permitting the devastation of His land.

This section has no connexion with the preceding or subsequent context. It may safely be dated late in Jehoiakim's reign, as relating to the attack upon Judah on the part of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites (see 2 Kgs xxiv. 1 f.), under the figure of birds of prey attacking one whose plumage attracts their attention as unusual. Du. places vv. 14—17 in the 2nd cent. B.C. He considers "the evil neighbours" of *v.* 14 to mean the persons of various nationalities who were living in the land in the time of John Hyrcanus and his son. He compares Zech. xiv. 16 ff.; Is. xix. 16 ff. as having a similar reference. But, as Pe. says, we do not in those passages, as here, read of exile followed by restoration, nor would a writer of the 2nd cent. B.C. have put into the mouth of Jeremiah a prediction which in fact was not realised.

The section may be subdivided thus.

(i) vv. 7—13. Jehovah's heritage has turned as a savage beast against Him. Therefore He has given her over to be the prey of neighbouring nations. She is like a speckled bird attacked by her own kind. The country is laid waste, because its inhabitants took no serious thought. The culture of the land brings no produce, because of the wrath of Jehovah.

(ii) vv. 14—17. Judah's foes shall themselves be driven into exile—permanent, if they refuse to hear Jehovah; but, if they turn to Him, they shall be restored to their lands.

I have forsaken mine house, I have cast off mine 7
 heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into
 the hand of her enemies. Mine heritage is become unto 8
 me as a lion in the forest: she hath uttered her voice
 against me; therefore I have hated her. Is mine heritage 9
 unto me as a speckled bird of prey? are the birds of prey
 against her round about? go ye, assemble all the beasts of
 the field, bring them to devour. Many shepherds have 10
 destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under
 foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate
 wilderness. They have made it a desolation; it mourneth 11
 unto me, being desolate; the whole land is made desolate,
 because no man layeth it to heart. Spoilers are come upon 12
 all the bare heights in the wilderness: for the sword of the
 LORD devoureth from the one end of the land even to the
 other end of the land: no flesh hath peace. They have sown 13
 wheat, and have reaped thorns; they have put themselves

7. *mine house*] shewn by the parallelism of the clauses to mean, not the Temple, but the nation itself; so in Hos. viii. 1, ix. 15.

8. *as a lion*] The open hostility of the people towards the LORD is likened by Him to the angry roar and fierce attack of a lion ranging the forest. He therefore withdraws and leaves it as some savage beast to the solitude that it has made for itself.

9. *bird of prey? are the birds of prey, etc.*] The change of one consonant (reading *ki* for *li*) would enable us to unite the two questions into one, and read (without "unto me") *bird of prey, that the birds of prey are, etc.* For the figure see introd. note, and for the method of expressing mingled amazement and pain cp. ii. 14.

10. *shepherds*] See on vi. 3.

vineyard] For this figure cp. Is. v. 1 ff.

have trodden my portion under foot] The figure is that of the destruction of vineyards by wandering hordes and their flocks.

11. *unto me*] lit. *upon me*, i.e. to my sorrow. Dr. quotes the parallel in Gen. xlviii. 7.

layeth it to heart] i.e. has taken warning in time.

12. *bare heights*] See on ch. iii. 2.

13. The *v.*, at least in its present context, is obscure. The subject is either (a) the spoilers, whose disasters, however, belong not to this but to the following paragraph, or (b) Judah, in which case the expressions are unsuited to the previous description of their attitude. Co. suggests that it should follow immediately on *v.* 4, but even so its connexion with that *v.* is not obvious.

to pain, and profit nothing: and ¹ye shall be ashamed of your fruits, because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

- ¹⁴ Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit: Behold, I will pluck them up from off their land, and will pluck up the house of Judah from
¹⁵ among them. And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them up, I will return and have compassion on them; and I will bring them again, every man to his
¹⁶ heritage, and every man to his land. And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, As the LORD liveth; even as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be
¹⁷ built up in the midst of my people. But if they will not hear, then will I pluck up that nation, plucking up and destroying it, saith the LORD.

- ¹³ Thus said the LORD unto me, Go, and buy thee a linen

¹ Or, *be ye ashamed* Or, *they shall be ashamed*

ye...your] Read *they...their*.

ashamed] See on ii. 26.

^{14—17.} See introd. summary to the section.

^{14.} *and will pluck up...from among them]* This clause, occurring in a passage otherwise dealing solely with foreign nations, is suspiciously like a gloss. Gi. for this and metrical reasons omits the clause, omitting also "which I have caused...to inherit."

^{16.} *to swear by my name]* See on ch. iv. 2.

CH. XIII. 1—11. THE ACTED SYMBOL OF THE LINEN GIRDLE.

This ch. consists of five sections, quite independent of one another. The first two are in poetic prose, and the remaining in *Ḳinah* metre. Three questions arise in respect to this first section: (i) Does it relate a real transaction or a vision? (ii) What is the application of the symbol? (iii) To what date may we refer it?

As regards (i) we may state that Du. rejects with scorn the passage, as non-Jeremianic, considering it as childish, and as a later insertion. Most commentators, however, refuse to accept this view. If we accept the view that the transaction was real, where was it carried out? Some think that the Heb. *Pērath*, rendered elsewhere Euphrates (though generally "the river" is prefixed to it), may have here meant Parah (Josh. xviii. 23), now *Wady Fara*, a town in a rocky valley three miles N. E. of Anathoth, chosen by Jeremiah for this purpose because its name

girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water. So I bought a girdle according to the word of the LORD, ² and put it upon my loins. And the word of the LORD ³ came unto me the second time, saying, Take the girdle that ⁴ thou hast bought, which is upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock. So I ⁵

suggested that of the actual river. Gi. and Erbt, however, understand Euphrates, the latter making the prophet perform the double journey (one of 300 or 400 miles) with the aim of enforcing by act what he had failed to do by his words. But it is more natural to consider that the transaction was of a subjective character, taking place in the prophet's mind only, and then announced by him as a picturesque method of illustrating the truth which he sought to bring home. As regards (ii), Judah shall be humiliated by exile. She has been in closest intimacy with her God, but, owing to her becoming corrupt in religion and morality, He has been compelled to cast her off. See on *vv.* 9—11. As to (iii) we may place the date early in Jeremiah's ministry, seeing that idolatrous corruption was already at that time in vigorous being. It is, however, by no means impossible that the date may fall within Jehoiakim's reign.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) *vv.* 1—7. The prophet, in obedience to the LORD's command, procures, in vision or reality, a linen waist-cloth, which has not yet been washed, and after wearing it a while, covers it up in a rocky cavity on the banks of Euphrates, and after a long interval, returns thither, digs it out, and finds that it is spoilt and useless. (ii) *vv.* 8—11. The meaning of the symbol. The self-esteem of the nation shall be crushed, because of their idolatrous ways. As a waist-cloth clings to the person of the wearer, so had Jehovah given Israel the glorious position of close and constant attachment to Himself, but they had utterly slighted the honour.

1. *a linen girdle*] Linen, not woollen, garments were appointed for priestly wear. See e.g. Exod. xxviii. 42. It was thus the fittest material for that which should symbolize the people of God.

put it not in water] He is not to soften it for greater comfort in wearing, or, with more direct bearing on the spiritual significance of the figure, he is to keep it at first separate from that which was to be the cause of its being marred, and so to symbolize Israel in its earlier independence and in the sunshine of Jehovah's favour.

4. *hide it there*] in such a way that moisture should have full access to it.

the rock] If an actual visit to the Euphrates is meant, the part referred to "cannot be anywhere near Babylon, where there are no 'rocks,' or rather 'crag's'—but in the upper part of its course, above Carchemish, or even above Samosata, where it still flows between rocky sides." Dr.

went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded
 6 me. And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD
 said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle
 7 from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there. Then
 I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from
 the place where I had hid it: and, behold, the girdle was
 8 marred, it was profitable for nothing. Then the word of
 9 the LORD came unto me, saying, Thus saith the LORD,
 After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the
 10 great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, which refuse to
 hear my words, which walk in the stubbornness of their
 heart, and are gone after other gods to serve them, and to
 worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is profitable
 11 for nothing. For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a
 man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house
 of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD;
 that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name,
 and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

8—11. See introd. summary to section.

9—11. These *vv.* have been thought (so Co.) to contain, as they stand, two explanations, mutually exclusive, of the symbol, *v.* 9 making the marring to denote exile, but *vv.* 10, 11 Judah's disobedience and idolatry, and it has been concluded that the latter is the original application intended and that the supposed inconsistency has come about through the introduction of some modification of the text. Thus Co. omits the whole passage except from "as the girdle" to "house of Israel" (*v.* 11). The omission, however, seems scarcely warranted. We should notice that it is in consequence of the *prophet's* action that the girdle is spoiled, and that Jeremiah, as wearing the girdle, represents Jehovah, the action by which the girdle's beauty is destroyed corresponding thus to exile (to which the mention of Euphrates as the place of hiding further alludes), but not to apostasy. Accordingly it is the pride of Judah and Jerusalem that shall be humbled by transportation, and it is this humbling that the symbol represents, and not moral corruption, although it is of course the latter (*v.* 10) which is the cause of the humiliation.

10. *stubbornness*] See ch. iii. 17.

shall even be] Heb. *let it be*.

11. The aptitude of the symbol is pointed out. Probably, according to an indication given by the Syr. Hex.'s rendering, the words "the whole house of Israel and" are a gloss.

Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word: Thus saith ¹² the LORD, the God of Israel, Every ¹bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not know that every ¹bottle shall be filled with wine? Then shalt ¹³ thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit ²upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness. And I will ¹⁴ dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have compassion, that I should not destroy them.

Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD ¹⁵

¹ Or, *jar*

² Heb. *for David upon his throne.*

12-14. THE SPOKEN SYMBOL OF THE BOTTLES.

12-14. A parable to indicate approaching overthrow. For intoxication as expressive of bewildered confusion and helplessness in the presence of calamity, cp. xxv. 15 f., xlviii. 26; Ps. lx. 3; Is. li. 17, 21-23. Through Jehovah's judicial action they are paralysed mentally, as with strong drink, and thus made to collide to their destruction. Cp. Ps. ii. 9. The date is uncertain, but a connexion in point of time with Nebuchadnezzar's victory at Carchemish (B.C. 605) is not improbable.

12. *bottle*] rather, as mg. *jar*. As surely as bottles are used for wine, so surely will drunkenness in the above sense enter into the people.

Do we not know...] What need is there of telling us such a truism?

14. *And I will dash them one against another*] Seized with the giddiness which accompanies intoxication, they shall be a source of mutual destruction.

even the fathers and the sons together] The overthrow shall be of the most harrowing description.

15-17. LET JUDAH BEWARE WHILE THERE IS TIME.

The prophet bids them acknowledge Jehovah, by submission and obedience, before they are overtaken by the blackness of national overthrow. Otherwise (says Jeremiah) I will in silent grief witness your ruin.

15. *be not proud*] Do not refuse through self-sufficiency to listen.

16. The figure is that of mountain travellers overtaken by darkness. Unable to advance without danger of falling, they at first await hopefully the dawn, but instead of light there supervenes only deeper gloom.

16 hath spoken. Give glory to the LORD your God, before
¹he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the
²dark mountains; and, while ye look for light, he turn it
 17 into ³the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But
 if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret for *your*
 pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with
 18 tears, because the LORD's flock is taken captive. Say thou
 unto the king and to the queen-mother, ⁴Humble yourselves,
 sit down: for your headtires are come down, even ⁵the
 19 crown of your glory. The cities of the South are shut up,

¹ Or, *it grow dark* ² Heb. *mountains of twilight*. ³ Or, *deep darkness*
⁴ Or, *Sit ye down low* ⁵ Or, *your beautiful crown*

Give glory] by confession of sin and obedience. Cp. for the expression Josh. vii. 19; 1 Sam. vi. 5; John ix. 24.

he cause darkness] better, as mg. *it grow dark*.

dark mountains] Heb. **mountains of twilight** is at once more literal and poetical.

the shadow of death] better, as mg. *deep darkness*. See on ii. 6.

17. *the LORD's flock*] As the rulers are called elsewhere (ii. 8 mg., iii. 15, vi. 3) shepherds (pastors), so the ruled are the flock. Cp. Ps. lxxx. 1, and so lxxiv. 1, lxxvii. 20, lxxviii. 52, lxxix. 13; also Zech. x. 3.

18, 19. ADDRESS TO THE KING AND THE QUEEN-MOTHER.

The highest shall be brought low, and the land with its cities emptied by universal captivity.

Graf and Du. make the king to be Jehoiakim and thus the queen-mother Zebidah (2 Kgs xxiii. 36). Most however take the utterance as belonging to the three months' reign of his successor, Jehoiachin, whose mother, Nehushta, is referred to in 2 Kgs xxiv. 8, 12, 15. The prominence attached to the queen-mother by Eastern custom would be in that case enhanced by the king's youth. Cp. xxii. 26.

18. *your headtires*] The word in MT. means *the place of the head* (and so the same consonants with rather different vocalisation in Gen. xxviii. 11, 1 Sam. xix. 16, xxvi. 7). We should therefore by a slight shortening of the word (so LXX) render *for come down from your head is your beautiful crown* (lit. *crown of beauty*).

Humble yourselves, sit down] better, as mg. *Sit ye down low*. Cp. xiv. 2.

19. *the South*] Heb. the *Negeb*, a barren region in the S. of Judah (see Gen. xii. 9 mg.), whose cities are named Josh. xv. 21—32. The sense is: none shall escape, not even those most remote from the point at which the invader from the north (v. 20) enters the land.

and there is none to open them: Judah is carried away captive all of it; it is wholly carried away captive.

Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the 20 north: where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? ¹What wilt thou say, when he shall set *thy* friends 21 over thee as head, seeing thou thyself hast instructed them against thee? shall not sorrows take hold of thee, as of a

¹ Or, *What wilt thou say, when he shall visit thee, seeing thou thyself hast instructed them against thee, even thy friends to be head over thee?*

it is wholly, etc.] We may make a very probable correction in MT., and so (with LXX) render *an entire captivity*.

20—27. LAMENT FOR THE CALAMITIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY JERUSALEM'S SIN.

See, O Jerusalem, the northern foe descends on thee. What has become of thy goodly nation? How wilt thou endure those who were erst thy friends, now become thy rulers? What shall be thy pangs? And dost thou ask, Wherefore? It is the penalty of thy sin. Evil, through inveterate custom, has become as immutable a thing with thee as is the Ethiopian's skin or the leopard's spotted hide. Scattered like the chaff that is whirled along by the desert wind, thou shalt have this for thy lot because of thy faithlessness. Shame and disgrace are the results of the lewd practices which thou hast openly carried on. Canst thou ever become clean again?

The date may well be that of the battle of Carchemish (B.C. 605), which exposed Judah defenceless to Nebuchadnezzar. The foe spoken of cannot be the Scythians (see on i. 13), as they never were "friends," whereas for the attempt to be on friendly terms with the Eastern powers we may cp. ii. 36, iv. 30.

20. *Lift up your eyes, and behold]* The verbs in MT. are fem. and sing., with a variant (K'ri) mas. and pl. The pronoun, probably by a slip, is pl. It is better to read with LXX, *Lift up thine eyes, O Jerusalem.*

the north] Cp. iv. 6, vi. 1, 22.

the flock] See on v. 17.

21. The construction and order in MT. are difficult, and the Hebrew words seem to have suffered some dislocation in the course of transmission. The general sense is: Those whom thou considerest to be thy friends (meaning Babylon, and perhaps the lesser neighbouring nations) are now to be thy harsh masters. This however is not clearly expressed in either text or mg. It is better, therefore, with Dr., to

22 woman in travail? And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore are these things come upon me? for the ¹greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels suffer
 23 violence. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are ²accustomed
 24 to do evil. Therefore will I scatter them, as the stubble
 25 that passeth away, ³by the wind of the wilderness. This is thy lot, the portion measured unto thee from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in
 26 falsehood. Therefore will I also discover thy skirts ⁴upon
 27 thy face, and thy shame shall appear. I have seen thine abominations, even thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, on the hills in the field. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! thou wilt not be made clean; how long shall it yet be?

14 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought.

¹ Or, *multitude*

² Heb. *taught*.

³ Or, *unto*

⁴ Or, *before*

render "What wilt thou say, when he shall set over thee as head those whom thou hast thyself taught to be friends unto thee?" Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 22 ff., where the "lovers" are enumerated.

23. The *v.* need not mean that Judah's sin was innate (see on vi. 7), but that habits of evil preclude a return to righteousness.

the Ethiopian] Through the Jews' intercourse with Egypt the Ethiopians were familiar to them. See xxxviii. 7. They were acquainted with the "merchandise of Ethiopia" (Is. xlv. 14), which consisted of gold, ebony, and elephants' tusks (Herod. III. 97, 114), and jewels (Job xxviii. 19).

the leopard] See ch. v. 6.

24. See on iv. 11.

by the wina] better, with mg. *unto the wind*.

27. *thou wilt not, etc.*] rather, *How long will it be, ere thou be made clean?*

CHS. XIV. 1—XV. 9. ACCUMULATION OF CALAMITIES.

JEHOVAH REJECTS THE PROPHET'S INTERCESSION.

Du. considers that this section, as made up of very various elements, cannot have been put together by Jeremiah in its present form, and that it thus bears evident traces of modification by later hands. Stade omits

Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, they sit ² in black upon the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And their nobles send their ¹little ones ²to the ³waters: they come to the pits, and find no water; they

¹ Or, *inferiors*

² Or, *for water*

xiv. 7—10, but they contain nothing that Jeremiah may not have uttered. The latter part of *v.* 10 ("therefore the LORD," etc.) comes direct from Hos. viii. 13. Schmidt rejects *vv.* 7—9 as being in the spirit of a later age, that of the second Isaiah, and not in harmony with *xiv.* 10—16, *xv.* 1—4*a.* Co., following Hitzig, thinks that two distinct utterances are here blended, viz. one as to the drought, *xiv.* 2—10, *xiv.* 19—*xv.* 1, the other threatening sword, famine, and pestilence, *xiv.* 12—18, *xv.* 2—9. We cannot with any confidence assign a date.

The section may be subdivided as follows. (i) *vv.* 1—6. Graphic description of the suffering caused to high and low, city and country, man and beast, through lack of sustenance and water. (ii) *vv.* 7—10. The prophet, in the face of this visitation, confesses the people's sin, and bases his intercessory appeal on the intimate relations between Jehovah and His people. The LORD refuses to condone their offences. (iii) *vv.* 11—18. Intercession is again rejected. Calamities shall be sent as retribution. Jeremiah pleads that the people have been misled by promises of peace from the false prophets. The LORD in reply disowns those prophets, and declares that they and those misled by them shall be involved in a common destruction. Jeremiah is bidden to pronounce a dirge over those without and those within the cities, the former put to the sword, the latter perishing from want. (iv) *vv.* 19—*xv.* 1. The people plead their cause and Jehovah's covenant with them, confess their sin, and acknowledge Jehovah as supreme over the powers of nature. The LORD declares that not the most powerful intercessors of the past could now alter His decision, and bids Judah depart from His presence. (v) *vv.* 2—9. When they ask, Whither? the reply is, To the various forms of death allotted to each. Their fate, consequent on their sins, shall form a solemn warning to the nations. Jerusalem shall be neglected, unwept, despised. The long-suffering of her God is at last exhausted. The inhabitants shall be dispersed as chaff. Husbands, sons, mothers shall be slain. Parents of many sons shall faint with grief, the land lies empty.

2. *the gates*] put, as often in Hebrew, for cities, i.e. for the inhabitants, as being the place of general resort.

they sit in black upon the ground] Cp. viii. 21, xiii. 18; also Ps. cxxxvii. 1; and Is. xlvii. 1.

3. *little ones*] rather, as mg. *inferiors*, i.e. servants.

pits] cisterns, or tanks, where the water was kept till wanted for use. See on ch. ii. 13.

return with their vessels empty: they are ashamed and
 4 confounded, and cover their heads. Because of the ground
 which is ¹chapt, for that no rain hath been in the land, the
 5 plowmen are ashamed, they cover their heads. Yea, the
 hind also in the field calveth, and forsaketh *her young*,
 6 because there is no grass. And the wild asses stand on the
 bare heights, they pant for air like ²jackals; their eyes fail,
 because there is no herbage.

7 Though our iniquities testify against us, work thou for
 thy name's sake, O LORD: for our backslidings are many;

¹ Or, *dismayed*

² Or, *the crocodile*

ashamed] See on ii. 26.

cover their heads] as a sign of the greatest grief or confusion. Cp.

² Sam. xv. 30; Esth. vi. 12.

4. *Because of the ground, etc.*] rather, according to Du.'s excellent emendation, with a slight change in MT., virtually supported by LXX, *The tillers of the ground are dismayed*. This enables us to restore (with mg.) to the verb rendered "chapt," but elsewhere used only of persons, its right sense, thus at the same time re-establishing parallelism of clauses.

5. *the hind*] For her affection for her young cp. Prov. v. 19, and for ancient writers' testimony to it see Bochart, *Hierozyicon*, Bk. III. ch. 17.

6. *bare heights*] See on ch. iii. 2.

pant for air] oppressed by heat and thirst.

jackals] See on ix. 11, but mg. (by the change of one Heb. letter) *the crocodile* (coming out of the water to breathe).

their eyes fail] in place of their sharpness of sight. Cp. Job xi. 20; Ps. lxix. 3; Lam. iv. 17, and contrast Jonathan's case in 1 Sam. xiv. 27.

7—10. See summary at commencement of the section. Is the intercession (a) the prophet's own, or (b) put by him into the mouth of the people? Co. supports (b) as indicated by v. 10, where the LORD's reply is addressed to them. It is true that v. 11 implies (a), but see note there. Du. on the other hand supports (a) but holds that the words are an ironical attack on the people's obstinate confidence in Jehovah's goodwill, while Erbt goes so far as to maintain that the prophet here bitterly parodies the words of the people assembled on a day of humiliation and prayer because of the drought. But the words are probably uttered in all seriousness, and ch. xv. 1 supports this view. Cp. for the earnest language of the confession Neh. i. 5 ff.; Dan. ix. 4 ff.

7. *for thy name's sake*] either (a) as the covenant God of Israel, as implied by the language of vv. 8, 9; cp. Exod. xxxiv. 6, or (b) for Thy

we have sinned against thee. O thou hope of Israel, the 8
saviour thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou
be as a sojourner in the land, and as a wayfaring man that
1 turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be 9
as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet
thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by
thy name; leave us not.

Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Even so have 10
they loved to wander; they have not refrained their feet:
therefore the LORD doth not accept them; now will he
remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. And the 11
LORD said unto me, Pray not for this people for *their* good.
When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they 12
offer burnt offering and 2 oblation, I will not accept them:

¹ Or, *spreadeth* his tent

² Or, *meal offering*

honour, that the heathen may behold Thy might and faithfulness. This
latter is much the more usual sense of the phrase. See Ps. lxxix. 9,
cvi. 8; Is. xlviii. 9; Ezek. xx. 9, 14, 22; also Josh. vii. 7—9.

8. *a sojourner in the land, etc.*] a passing traveller, with no interest
in the country or in the people.

turneth aside] mg., less well, *spreadeth* his tent.

9. *astonied*] rather, by a very slight change in one Heb. letter,
asleep. So LXX. For the thought cp. Ps. xxxv. 23, xlv. 23, lxxviii.
65.

a mighty man] a warrior. So in xx. 11.

we are called by thy name] See on vii. 10.

10—12. The LORD's answer.

10. *Even so*] My withdrawal from them is merely the counterpart of
their withdrawal from Me.

therefore, etc.] See introductory note to section.

11—18. See introductory summary to section.

11, 12. These *vv.* (to "accept them") are very possibly (so Hitzig
and Co.) an insertion by a later hand to connect the preceding passage
relating to drought with that dealing with other woes. See introd.
note. Gi. (*Metrik*) holding 11—14 to be only poetic prose, with Kīnah
"shining through," considers that they may have had their ultimate
origin with Baruch.

12. *oblation*] mg. *meal offering*, Heb. *minḥah*, sometimes, specially
in the Levitical laws, in this narrower sense, as accompanying a sacrifice
of animals, but also generally, of a present to procure the favour of a
superior (Gen. xxxii. 20, xliii. 11), and so used of an offering (including
animals) to God (Gen. iv. 5; 1 Sam. ii. 17, 29, etc.). See Dr.
P. 359.

but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine,
 13 and by the pestilence. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD!
 behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the
 sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you
 14 ¹assured peace in this place. Then the LORD said unto me,
 The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not,
 neither have I commanded them, neither spake I unto
 them: they prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination,
 and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart.
 15 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that
 prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say,
 Sword and famine shall not be in this land: By sword and
 16 famine shall those prophets be consumed. And the people
 to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of
 Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they
 shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their
 sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness
 17 upon them. And thou shalt say this word unto them, Let
 mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them
 not cease; for the virgin daughter of my people is broken
 18 with a great breach, with a very grievous wound. If I go
 forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword!
 and if I enter into the city, then behold ²them that are sick
 with famine! for both the prophet and the priest ³go about
⁴in the land and have no knowledge.

¹ Heb. *peace of truth*.

² Heb. *the sicknesses of famine*.

³ Or, *traffick*

⁴ Or, *into a land that they know not*

13, 14. For the attitude of the false prophets and their relation to the true see Intr. pp. xxxii. f.; also xxiii. 9 ff.

13. *assured peace*] mg. Heb. *peace of truth* (stability). They may have sought to support their reassuring assertions by reference to such utterances as those of Is. xxxvii. 33 ff.

15, 16. Gi. now (*Metrik*) omits these *vv.*, apparently as failing to satisfy the metrical conditions which prevail elsewhere in the ch. (*Kinah*).

16. *their wickedness*] This shall be itself their punishment. Cp. ii. 19.

17. *grievous*] Heb. *sick*. See on x. 19.

18. *them that are sick with famine*] lit. as mg. *the sicknesses of famine*.

go about] mg. *traffick*. Such is the sense of the Heb. verb elsewhere,

Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed 19
 Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for
 us? We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a
 time of healing, and behold dismay! We ¹acknowledge, 20
 O LORD, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers:
 for we have sinned against thee. Do not ²abhor *us*, for thy 21
 name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory:
 remember, break not thy covenant with us. Are there any 22
 among the vanities of the heathen that can cause rain? or
 can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD
 our God? therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast
³made all these things.

Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and 15

¹ Or, *know*

² Or, *contemn*

³ Or, *done*

e.g. Gen. xxxiv. 10, 21, but the corresponding consonants in Syriac are found, though rarely, with the meaning, *to go as a beggar*. In either case, a fall in rank is indicated. Gi. proposes to substitute one of the two Heb. letters represented by *s* for the other, thus obtaining the sense of sinking to the earth in *mourning garb*. Cp. for this thought xiii. 18. So Co.

in the land and have no knowledge] mg. *into a land that they know not*. But the last four words are obscure, and, as Peake suggests, may be the commencement of a new sentence of which the remainder has been lost.

19—xv. 1. See introd. summary to section. Co. somewhat drastically considers that the expression "the throne of thy glory" (v. 21), i.e. Jerusalem, must belong to a later date than Jeremiah's, and that this excludes from genuineness vv. 19—22. He also, however, points to metrical difficulties, which Gi. (*Metrik*) gets over by a considerable amount of omissions. The latter part of v. 19 has already occurred in viii. 15, but one passage (we can hardly say which) is probably quoted from the other.

20—22. In these vv. three pleas are urged on behalf of the people: (i) their contrition, (ii) God's honour, (iii) their hopelessness of any other aid.

21. *the throne of thy glory*] Jerusalem, or more particularly the Temple, where the visible glory was enthroned above the Ark.

22. A fragment, as shewn by its subject, of the former of the two utterances combined in the section.

art not thou he, O LORD our God] rather, **art not thou the LORD our God?**

xv. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me*] No advocate, however powerful his intercession, could now prevail with Me. For

Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go
 2 forth. And it shall come to pass, when they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD: Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for captivity, to
 3 captivity. And I will appoint over them four ¹kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to ²tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour
 4 and to destroy. And I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that
 5 which he did in Jerusalem. For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall
 6 turn aside to ask of thy welfare? Thou hast rejected me,

¹ Heb. *families*.

² Heb. *drag*.

Moses see Exod. xxxiii. 11—14; Numb. xiv. 13—20; Deut. ix. 18—20, 25—29, and for Samuel 1 Sam. vii. 9, xii. 23; cp. these two united in a similar connexion of thought in Ps. xcix. 6.

stood before] For the phrase in this sense of intercession cp. xviii. 20, Gen. xviii. 22, xix. 27. For a different sense see on v. 19.

my mind could not be toward] I could not incline with favour towards.

2—9. See introd. summary to section.

2. *Whither shall we go forth?*] If we are driven unpardoned from the presence of the LORD, to what shall we betake ourselves? The reply is a stern and even ironical one.

death] by pestilence. Cp. xliii. 11; Ezek. xiv. 21, xxxiii. 27, and in English "the Black Death."

3. *kinds*] lit. as mg. *families*. Four sorts of destructive agencies. Similar threats occur chs. xix. 7, xxxiv. 20.

tear] lit. as mg. *drag*.

4. The latter part ("because of...in Jerusalem") may be a gloss, founded on such passages as 2 Kgs xxi. 11 ff. Jeremiah does not elsewhere name Manasseh in connexion with the evil deeds of that reign.

cause them to be tossed to and fro among] *to shake* is the lit. meaning of the Heb. root, hence, *to move in fear, to tremble* (Esth. v. 9). The Heb. substantive here (from that root) thus means *consternation*, i.e. an object of it, and occurs again in xxiv. 9, xxix. 18. Thus we should render, **I will make them to be a consternation to, etc.**

saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore have I stretched out my hand against thee, and destroyed thee; I am weary with repenting. And I have fanned them ⁷ with a fan in the gates of the land; I have bereaved *them* of children, I have destroyed my people; they have not returned from their ways. Their widows are increased to ⁸ me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them ¹against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused anguish and terrors to fall upon her suddenly. She that hath borne seven languisheth; she hath given up ⁹

¹ Or, *against the mother and the young men* *

7. *I have fanned them with a fan*] “Fan, whether verb or noun, is now practically obsolete in the sense here intended.” Dr. p. 360. We should rather render, *Have winnowed them with a winnowing-fork*. The Arabic word *midhra*, corresponding to the Heb. *mizreh* here and in Is. xxx. 24, is “in use in modern Syria, and denotes a wooden fork almost six feet in length, with five or six prongs, bound together by fresh hide, which, on shrinking, forms a tight band....The wooden shovel of Is. xxx. 24 was used with it. The mixture of corn, chaff, and broken straw, produced by threshing, was shaken about with these two implements, usually in some exposed spot, when a wind was blowing (generally in the afternoon or evening, Ruth iii. 2), and the wind carried away the chaff and the straw (Ps. i. 4). If however the wind was too violent it would blow away the corn as well: hence the point of Jer. iv. 11.” *Ibid*.

the gates of the land] the borders (the parts by which men enter and leave the country). Cp. Nah. iii. 13.

they have not returned from their ways] LXX have, *on account of their evils* (wicked deeds), probably meant as a free paraphrase, unless we suppose the word for *evils* to have fallen out of MT.

8, 9. Co. considers the order of clauses to have suffered dislocation. He inserts “Their widows...the seas” after “...confounded” (v. 9), thus improving both sense and *Kinah* rhythm.

8. *against the mother of the young men*] mg. *against the mother and the young men* who have fallen in battle. If we may accept an emendation of MT. by Du., we shall read *mother and suckling*.

at noonday] i.e. at an unexpected time. Cp. vi. 4 with note.

anguish] The word occurs elsewhere only Hos. xi. 9, where it is rendered by “the city,” the ordinary sense of the Heb. word, but the reading of MT. there is suspected. Dr. (p. 361) suggests, but with hesitation, a root which would give the sense of *excitement*, or *agitation* of alarm.

9. *She that hath borne seven*] and therefore, from the Jewish point

the ghost; her sun is gone down while it was yet day; she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

10 Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have

of view, might have thought herself secure and prosperous. Seven was the perfect number. Cp. 1 Sam. ii. 5.

hath given up the ghost] hath died.

while it was yet day] before she had reached the evening of her life. Cp. Amos viii. 9.

CH. XV. 10—21. THE PROPHET BEWAILS HIS LOT. GOD'S REPLY.

The passage as a whole is one of the most eloquent and pathetic in the Book. The date cannot be determined with confidence. The latter part of Jehoiakim's reign is a fitting one to suggest. *Vv.* 13, 14 are almost certainly to be rejected, while 11 and 12 need either drastic emendation or omission. Gi. considers that 11—14 have been inserted here from another context. They are also unrhymical. We may subdivide as follows.

(i) *vv.* 10—14. Alas, that I was ever born to be assailed by all men. I am subjected to revilings, as though I were a usurer or a defaulting debtor. Jehovah indeed promised me support in evil times, and that my foes should seek my aid when trouble came. Can what is strong as northern iron or bronze be broken? [Thy valued possessions throughout the land shall be plundered by thy foes because of thy misdeeds. They shall lead thee into captivity, by reason of thy sins.]

(ii) *vv.* 15—18. O LORD, Thou knowest that my sufferings are on Thy behalf. Spare Thou my foes no longer. Thy words have been my stay and sustenance, yea, my joy, in my loneliness. Thy wrath at the wickedness of the nation has been mine as well. Shall my pain be ever as now? Shall my trust in Thee be brought to confusion?

(iii) *vv.* 19—21. *The Lord's reply*: If thou wilt return wholeheartedly to My service, and reject from within thee every unworthy thought, I will accept thee again, and the people, unsolicited, shall seek My words at thy mouth. Through My support thou shalt be impregnable against all attacks of the strongest of thy enemies.

10. *Woe is me, etc.*] Cp. Job iii. 1 ff., also Savonarola's address to God in one of his sermons, "O Lord, whither hast thou led me? From my desire to save souls for Thee, I can no longer return to my rest. Why hast Thou made me 'a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth?'" W. R. Clark's *Savonarola*, p. 230.

not lent on usury, neither have men lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me. The LORD said, ¹¹ Verily ¹I will ²strengthen thee for good; verily ³I will cause the enemy to make supplication unto thee in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

⁴Can one break iron, even iron from the north, and brass? Thy substance and thy treasures will I give for a ¹³ spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all

¹ The Vulgate has, *thy remnant shall be for good*.
reading is, *release*.

² Another

³ Or, *I will intercede for thee with the enemy*

⁴ Or, *Can iron break iron from &c.*

I have not lent...] Cp. Deut. xxiii. 20; Ps. xv. 5. Necessity being almost the sole motive for borrowing, the moneylender would naturally be held in extreme disfavour. So "Interest is money begotten of money; so that of the sources of gain this is the most unnatural" (Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk. 1. ch. 3, end). "Sources of gain, which incur the hatred of mankind, as those of tax-gatherers, of *usurers*." Cicero, *de Officiis*, Bk. 1. § 150. Cp.

"When did friendship take

A breed for barren metal of his friend?"

Mer. of Venice, I. 3, ver. 123.

11. The *v.* is difficult without applying considerable conjectural emendation. The whole is best taken as Jeremiah's utterance. "The LORD said" is not a formula which elsewhere in Jeremiah introduces a Divine utterance. The LXX's rendering of the passage, however, suggests that their text had the usual formula. The verb translated "strengthen" is not pure Heb. but Aramaic. *V.* 10 seems to want rather an assertion that the prophet on his side had deserved the reverse of revilings from the people. Hence Co. with certain changes in MT. renders "Amen, Jehovah, to thy curses, if I did not make intercession with Thee for the enemy's welfare at the time of their misfortune and need."

strengthen] mg. suggests *release*, which is perhaps the meaning of the reading in MT. R.V. text follows the mg. of MT.

I will cause, etc.] mg. *I will intercede for thee with the enemy*. But see above.

12. Also very difficult. No satisfactory emendation has been proposed. If, which is very doubtful, the *v.* is to be retained as it stands, the speaker is either (*a*) Jehovah, declaring that the Chaldaean foe shall prevail, or (*b*) better, Jeremiah, as mg. *Can iron break iron from, etc.*, i.e. can my strength be a match for the overwhelming force of my enemies? "The point of reference to iron from the North is that the best and hardest iron came from the Black Sea." Pe.

13, 14. For these *vv.* which, as addressed to the people, break

- 14 thy borders. And 'I will make *them* to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you.
- 15 O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered
- 16 reproach. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God
- 17 of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced: I sat alone because of thy hand; for
- 18 thou hast filled me with indignation. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful *brook*, as waters that ²fail?
- 19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I

¹ Or, *I will make thine enemies to pass into &c.* According to some ancient authorities, *I will make thee to serve thine enemies in a land &c.* See ch. xvii. 4.

² Heb. *are not sure.*

harshly into the dialogue between Jehovah and the prophet, and are most likely an insertion from xvii. 3 f., see notes there.

15—18. See summary at commencement of section.

15. *longsuffering*] mercy towards my enemies.

16. He describes the joy with which he first received the Divine commission.

were found] Cp. Ezek. iii. 1, where "findest" (omitted, however, in the best MSS. of LXX) stands in the same connexion.

I did eat them] The expression conveys two notions: (i) joyful acceptance, (ii) close union. It is however a strange one. LXX, slightly changing MT., read (for "I have suffered...joy"), *I have borne reproach from them that despise thy words. Consume them, and thy word shall be to me a joy, etc.* For "consume them" cp. Ps. lix. 13.

am called] See on vii. 10.

17. *because of thy hand*] Thy firm, compelling grasp. Cp. Is. viii. 11; Ezek. i. 3, xxxvii. 1.

18. *a deceitful brook*] The dried-up watercourse belies the anticipations of the thirsty traveller. Cp. Job vi. 15.

fail] lit. as mg. *are not sure.*

19—21. See summary at commencement of section.

19. *If thou return*] If thou wilt dismiss thy doubts and thy tone of reproach and distrust, which is virtually apostasy from Me.

bring thee again, that thou mayest stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: they shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them. And I will make thee unto this people ²⁰ a fenced brasen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. And I will ²¹ deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

The word of the LORD came also unto me, saying, ¹⁶

mayest stand before me] mayest be My minister. The phrase is a common one in this sense, e.g. 1 Kgs xviii. 15; 2 Kgs iii. 14: cp. Prov. xxii. 29. But see also on v. 1.

if thou take forth the precious from the vile] i.e. if that which comes forth from thy lips (cp. the expression in xvii. 16) be choice, and wholly separate from the common. "Vile" is a misleading translation. It should be *common*, i.e. of no account.

my mouth] My mouth-piece, spokesman. Cp. Exod. iv. 16.

they shall, etc.] Du. rejects this last part of the v., as an unsuitable play on the word "return" at the beginning of the v., as well as because the despisers of Jehovah's words had no intention of returning to the prophet.

^{20, 21.} Cp. i. 18 f.

^{21.} *the terrible*] The chief men in Jerusalem, probably meaning Jehoiakim and his counsellors. See note on ch. xii. 7.

CHS. XVI. 1—XVII. 18. FURTHER PROPHECIES OF DISASTER, WITH PASSAGES OF COMFORT INTERSPERSED.

This section, though Jeremicanic in its general character, owes to editorship such unity as it possesses, while certain passages in it (see on xvi. 14 f. repeated in xxiii. 7 f.) are clearly out of place. It may be subdivided as follows.

- (i) xvi. 1—9. The prophet must abstain from all domestic ties. Death and ignominy shall soon be the portion of every family of Judah. Neither must he share in the joys of others, nor in mourning rites, which shall shortly be compelled to cease in the presence of universal calamity.
- (ii) vv. 10—13. When the people ask, What is our sin, that we are served thus? the answer is to be, that they have embraced idolatrous rites and forsaken Jehovah. Therefore shall exile be their portion, and therein they shall have opportunity to put to the test the efficacy of the service which they have paid to the gods of strange lands.
- (iii) vv. 14, 15. Yet deliverance shall come, so signal that it shall even suffice to eclipse the memory of the deliverance from Egyptian thralldom.
- (iv) vv. 16—18. As fishes are netted in shoals, and wild animals in their

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have
 3 sons or daughters in this place. For thus saith the LORD
 concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are
 born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare
 them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this
 4 land: 'They shall die ¹of grievous deaths; they shall not be
 lamented, neither shall they be buried; they shall be as

¹ Heb. *deaths of sicknesses*.

scattered hiding places by huntsmen, so shall the dwellers in crowded cities and sparsely populated country parts alike be captured. The polluting rites, laid bare to God's searching gaze, shall receive a double punishment. (v) vv. 19—21. Jehovah, the prophet's one hope, shall yet be sought by the nations, confessing that the gods they have hitherto served, are vain and profitless. At length they shall acknowledge fully His might. (vi) xvii. vv. 1—4. The sin of Judah is both ingrained and patent to all. Her cherished possessions and the seats of her idol worship shall be laid waste. She shall be driven forth from the covenant-land to a foreign soil. Jehovah's wrath is unquenchable. (vii) vv. 5—8. He who relies on mere human aid shall lead a stunted life, like the juniper tree in the desert; but he who trusts in the LORD shall be as the riverside tree, vigorous and abundant in foliage. (viii) vv. 9—13. The LORD's searchlight reveals unsuspected evils in the heart. As the brood which are not the partridge's own, and which soon forsake her, so shall it be with unlawfully acquired riches. Jerusalem is of old Jehovah's seat. They that forsake Him shall soon be blotted out. (ix) vv. 14—18. Jeremiah appeals for deliverance from the evil thoughts towards God with which the taunts of his enemies have to his horror inspired him. He pleads that through all he has been a faithful prophet, and prays that evil may fall on his foes, not on him.

2. *Thou shalt not take thee a wife*] Marriage was a state of life in special favour with the Jews. By his act of self-denial therefore Jeremiah was to shew his full submission to the will of God, while it would at the same time be a forcible mode of conveying the message of coming woes which he was charged to deliver to the people.

3. *and concerning their mothers...this land*] Possibly these words are a gloss, as being apparently irrelevant, but not (as Co.) the whole v., for then we should have no fitting reference for "they" of v. 4.

4. *grievous deaths*] lit. as mg. *deaths of sicknesses*.

they shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried] We may compare the condition of things in the plague at Athens B.C. 430: "Such was the state of dismay and sorrow, that even the nearest relatives neglected the sepulchral duties...the dead and dying lay piled upon one another not merely in the public roads, but even in the temples...Those bodies which escaped entire neglect were burnt or buried without the

dung upon the face of the ground: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the 5 house of mourning, neither go to lament, neither bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people; saith the LORD, even lovingkindness and tender mercies. Both great and small shall die in this land: they shall not 6 be buried, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them: neither 7 shall men ¹break *bread* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother. And thou shalt not go into the house of feasting to sit with 8

¹ See Is. lviii. 7.

customary mourning and with unseemly carelessness." Grote's *Hist. of Greece*, ch. XLIX. See Thucyd. II. 52.

5. *Enter not...*] The prophet's abstinence from the accustomed marks of respect to the dead and sympathy with the relatives is to be a forerunner of the time when such abstinence shall become general on account of the universal prevalence of suffering and death.

mourning] lit. *a cry*, found elsewhere only Am. vi. 7 "revelry," in which sense Du. and Co. (who strike out *v.* 8) understand it here. If so, the *v.* will mean, Neither rejoice with them that rejoice, nor weep with them that weep.

6. *nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald*] practices common among semi-civilized races. For both together, as here, cp. xlvii. 5; for the former, xli. 5, and perhaps (see C.B.) Hos. vii. 14; for the latter, Is. iii. 24, xv. 2, xxii. 12; Ezek. vii. 18; Am. viii. 10; Mic. i. 16. They are forbidden Lev. xix. 28, xxi. 5; Deut. xiv. 1. The former of these practices represented the custom of human sacrifices as a propitiation to the spirit of the departed. Herodotus (iv. 71) describes the funeral rites of a Scythian king as requiring no less than six human victims.

7. *break bread for them*] The same verb as in Is. lviii. 7 ("deal"). There the word for bread (*lehem*) stands in MT., and a very slight change here would convert "for them" (Heb. *lahem*) into the same word. If on the other hand we keep *lahem*, *lehem* must have dropped out after it. The reference is to the custom for mourners to fast (cp. 2 Sam. iii. 35), whereupon their sympathetic friends brought them bread and wine to console them.

the cup of consolation] on the principle stated Prov. xxxi. 6.

8. Co. omits the *v.*, but on inadequate grounds.

- 9 them, to eat and to drink. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom
 10 and the voice of the bride. And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?
 11 then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and
 12 have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; and ye have done evil more than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, so that
 13 ye hearken not unto me: therefore will I cast you forth out of this land into the land that ye have not known, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; ¹for I will shew you no favour.
 14 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it

¹ Or, *where*

9—21. Du. rejects all these *vv.* Co. omits 9—13, suspects the genuineness of 14, 15 both here and in xxiii. 7 f., and rejects 16, as well as portions of 17—21. Gi. retains of the whole series only *v.* 19, while admitting (*Metrik*) that 20, 21 *may* be genuine. Schmidt denies the genuineness of 14—21. There is thus a considerable consensus of authorities against the passage, but their arguments do not appear conclusive except as to 14, 15. See further in individual notes. According to Gi. (*Metrik*) metre is doubtful or non-existent, except in 7, 8, 19—21.

9. Cp. vii. 34.

10—13. See introd. summary to section.

10. Cp. v. 19, xiii. 22.

12. *stubbornness*] Cp. ch. iii. 17.

13. *there shall ye serve other gods*] The original thought of Jehovah as a national Deity led to the feeling that change of country involved a loss of His protection. Cp. Jud. xi. 24; 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. "Large numbers of the exiles probably felt that the destruction of the State had snapped the tie which bound them to Yahweh." Pe.

for] perhaps as mg. *where*.

14, 15. See introd. summary to section. These two verses, recurring

shall no more be said, As the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity concealed from mine eyes. And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; ¹because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable things, and have filled mine inheritance with their abominations. O LORD, my strength, and my strong

¹ Or, *because they have polluted my land: they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable things and their abominations*

as they do in a suitable context as xxiii. 7 f., must be considered to be here, at all events, an importation. "The context on both sides relates to Judah's approaching exile, and vv. 16—18 continue the line of thought of vv. 10—13." Dr. In LXX they are found, quite incongruously, after xxiii. 40 instead of in the earlier position in that ch.

16—18. See introd. summary to section.

16. For the metaphor from fishing cp. Ezek. xii. 13, xxix. 4 f.; Am. iv. 2; Hab. i. 14 ff.
rocks] See on iv. 29.

18. *first*] The word (*ri'shônah*) is not found in LXX, and was probably inserted after vv. 14 f. had been introduced into the text. Co. however thinks it is a corruption of the frequent expression (e.g. Jud. ix. 57) '*al ro'shām, upon their head.*

double] Cp. Is. xl. 2.

because they have polluted] The mg. is more strictly in accordance with the Hebrew.

the carcasses, etc.] the idols themselves, called carcasses as being in their nature polluting to the touch like a dead body.

The whole of v. 18 is unmetrical, and Co. rejects the second part (from "because"), as containing language belonging to later times, e.g. "carcasses" in connexion with idols, as in Ezek. vi. (specially in vv. 5, 13) and Lev. xxvi. 30.

19—21. See introd. summary to section. For the thought in v. 19

hold, and my refuge in the day of affliction, unto thee shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Our fathers have inherited nought but lies, *even* vanity
 20 and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make
 21 unto himself gods, which yet are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is Jehovah.

17 The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, *and* with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table
 2 of their heart, and upon the horns of *your* altars; whilst

¹ Another reading is, *their*.

cp. xii. 15 f. and for the interest felt by Jeremiah in the religious life of the heathen, ii. 11 *a*. Hence Co. with Gi. accepts the *v*. as genuine.

19. *my strength, and my strong hold*] The two Hebrew substantives are derivatives of the same root.

vanity...no profit] See on ii. 5, 8.

21. Gi. considers this *v*. to be late, as being in the style of the second Is. (cp. Is. xlii. 6) and Ezek. (xxxvi. 23).

xvii. 1—4. See introd. summary to section.

The *vv*. are omitted in LXX, either (as St Jerome suggests) from unwillingness that the lasting condemnation here expressed should be put on permanent record against them, or because a translator's eye accidentally wandered from the last word of xvi. 21 to the same ("the LORD") in xvii. 5. *Vv*. 3 f. are repeated from xv. 13 f., where the LXX rendering exists. The passage is doubtless genuine, though the text is difficult and probably not free from corruption.

1. *a pen of iron*] used for making permanent marks on a hard surface, e.g. on rocks (Job xix. 24).

diamond] as used now by glaziers on account of its extreme hardness. Pliny tells us (*Hist. Nat.* xxxvii. 15) that the ancients were well acquainted with the cutting powers of the diamond, and used to set it in iron. Judah's guilt is, as it were, indelibly engraved upon their utterly hard hearts.

the table of their heart] their inward nature. Cp. Prov. iii. 3, vii. 3.

horns] probably metal projections from the corners (Exod. xxvii. 2).

your] better read, as in mg. (with LXX) *their*.

2, 3. The text is difficult, and pretty certainly contains some error. Du. and Co. omit from "whilst their" to "Asherim," as a gloss, introduced to shew how indelible was Judah's guilt, to be remembered by future generations. If this change be adopted, the passage will stand thus:

their children remember their altars and their ¹Asherim by the green trees upon the high hills. O my mountain in the ³field, I will give thy substance and all thy treasures for a spoil, *and* thy high places, because of sin, throughout all thy borders. And thou, even of thyself, shalt discontinue ⁴from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger which shall burn for ever.

Thus saith the LORD: Cursed is the man that trusteth in ⁵man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth

¹ See Ex. xxxiv. 13.

"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron,

With the point of a diamond is it graven upon the table of their heart,

Upon the horns of their altars, upon [every] spreading tree,

Upon the high hills, the mountains in the field." (Dr. in notes.)

Gi. suggests, with the change of one letter in MT., "so that their children will remember," but prefers "for a remembrance before me," omitting the rest of the *v.* as a gloss. He thus obtains *Ḳinah* measure for the passage.

Asherim] The Asherah was a rough hewn post, probably representing a sacred tree, and placed alongside of an altar. As having associations with heathenism, it was forbidden to worshippers of Jehovah. See Ex. xxxiv. 13 (and *mg.*); Deut. xii. 3, etc. It *may* have been connected with devotions paid to a goddess Asherah or Ashrat.

3. See on *v.* 2 for amended reading, which is adopted by Du. and Co. The rendering in the text makes the "mountain" to apply to Jerusalem. But as a designation for the city it has a strange appearance, and xxi. 13, quoted in its support, is precarious.

thy substance... (v. 4) for ever] See on xv. 13 f. where the greater part of this passage has occurred in a form somewhat less well preserved.

4. *and thou, even of thyself, shalt discontinue*] i.e. shalt cease to retain a hold upon thy country. We should rather read, *and thou shalt let thine hand fall*, adopting J. D. Michaelis's emendation, suggested by Deut. xv. 3, where the same Hebrew verb in immediate connexion with "thy hand" is used to indicate the cancelling of a debt. Du. and Co. needlessly reject this part of the *v.*, for metrical reasons and as prosaic in expression.

I will cause thee to serve thine enemies] So in all probability we should read in xv. 14, according to the second of the alternative margins there.

5—8. See introd. summary to section. The antithesis in these verses is sharply defined, the two courses of human conduct making the men

6 from the LORD. For he shall be like ¹the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land
7 and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the
8 LORD, and whose ²hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out his roots by the river, and shall not ³fear when heat cometh, but his leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.
9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately

¹ Or, *a tamarisk* ² Heb. *trust*.

³ According to another reading, *see*.

who practise them respectively to fade and to flourish. Cp. Ps. i. 3 f. The passage is pretty clearly an insertion, but almost as certainly is to be ascribed to Jeremiah. Co. suggests as the reason for its being placed here that, as *v.* 4 was held to refer to the exile, "the man, etc." was thought to be Zedekiah, who, having relied on the fleshly arm of Egypt, and refusing to listen to God's warnings through Jeremiah, was deprived of his children, blinded, and imprisoned at Babylon, where he was to pine in solitude.

6. *the heath*] mg. *a tamarisk*. The Hebrew substantive occurs again in *xlvi.* 9 and means in both cases a *juniper tree*, probably of the dwarf variety (so Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, p. 358), often cropped by the wild goats of the desert and thus stripped and desolate. In Ps. *cii.* 17 (its only remaining occurrence), it means "destitute," referring there also to Israel in exile.

7. *hope*] lit. as mg. *trust*.

8. *fear*] to be preferred, as is shewn by the parallelism, "shall not be careful," to the mg. *see*, which is the reading proposed in MT. mg. The latter was doubtless suggested to the Mass. by "see" in *v.* 6.

shall not be careful in the year of drought] because, as planted by the waterside, it is independent of rain.

9—13. See introd. summary to section. This sub-section is made up of three isolated pieces, 9, 10; 11; 12, 13; the metres also varying.

9, 10. Du. (so too Co.) suggests that these *vv.* link on closely to *v.* 14. In *v.* 9, according to him, the prophet is confessing his personal consciousness of sin, discovered by probing beneath the fair exterior to the hidden depths of his heart. In *v.* 10 the LORD replies, that the intricacies and subtleties of the human heart are open to His gaze. In *v.* 14 accordingly the prophet prays the great Physician, who can so fully diagnose the disease, to exercise His healing power. Whether Du.'s suggestion be accepted or not, the *vv.* have no close connexion with what precedes or immediately follows.

sick: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try 10 the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. As the partridge ¹that 11 gathereth *young* which she hath not brought forth, so is he that getteth riches, and not by right; in the midst of his days ²they shall leave him, and at his end he shall be a fool.

A glorious throne, *set* on high from the beginning, is 12 the place of our sanctuary. O LORD, the hope of Israel, 13 all that forsake thee shall be ashamed; they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have

¹ Or, *sitteth on eggs which she hath not laid*

² Or, *he shall leave them*

10. *search...reins*] See on xi. 20.
even to give, etc.] found also xxxii. 19.

11. *As the partridge, etc.*] mg. *sitteth on eggs which she hath not laid*. We need not take the statement to indicate more than a popular belief of that day, of which the prophet availed himself by way of an illustration. (Woods, however [see Woods and Powell, *The Hebrew Prophets*, II. 104 f., quoted by Pe.], maintains that the partridge does act in accordance with both text and mg.) "The young birds soon forsake their false mother, and so does wealth its unjust possessor. Or perhaps the words should be rendered, *that heapeth together* (eggs), *but doth not bring forth* (young)—with allusion to the large number of eggs laid by the partridge, which are eagerly sought for by the Arabs as food, so that the bird often hatches no young." Dr. who quotes Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, pp. 224 f.

they shall leave him] mg. (and A.V.), better, *he shall leave them*.

a fool] Heb. *nābhāl*. "The fault of the *nābhāl* was not weakness of reason, but moral and religious insensibility, an invincible lack of sense, or perception, for the claims of either God or man." Dr. *Parallel Psalter*, p. 457. See Is. xxxii. 5 f. and cp. for an example 1 Sam. xxv. 25.

12, 13. These verses, the third of the small group of isolated pieces (see above) which compose this sub-section, are probably to be taken in close connexion, the whole of *v.* 12 being in form an invocation of the Temple as the scene of God's visible glory, but in reality an address to Himself. O LORD, *throne of glory, exalted from the beginning, the place of our sanctuary, hope of Israel, all that forsake thee, etc.* In *v.* 13, ch. xiv. 8 supplies the beginning, and ch. ii. 13 the end, while the *v.* also reminds us of Is. i. 28 f. The two *vv.* may be safely held to be an insertion by an editor of the Book.

13. *shall be written in the earth*] Their names shall be blotted out, unlike those engraved in some enduring material. Ewald restores the parallelism with "shall be ashamed" of the previous clause by an

14 forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters. Heal
me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall
15 be saved: for thou art my praise. Behold, they say unto
16 me, Where is the word of the LORD? let it come now. As
for me, I have not hastened from being a shepherd after
thee; neither have I desired ¹the woeful day; thou knowest:
17 that which came out of my lips was before thy face. Be
not a terror unto me: thou art my refuge in the day of
18 evil. Let them be ashamed that persecute me, but let not
me be ashamed; let them be dismayed, but let not me be
dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and ²destroy
them with double destruction.

¹ Some ancient versions read, *the judgement day of man.*

² Heb. *break them with a double breach.*

emendation which gives "they that depart from *thee* in the land shall be *put to confusion*." Gi., amending differently, "shall be cut off from the earth." Cp. Ps. xxxiv. 16.

the fountain] See on ch. ii. 13.

14—18. See introd. summary to section.

14. See introd. note on vv. 9, 10. Jeremiah prays that God's character for faithfulness may be vindicated in his own case.

15. The scoffs of his enemies suggested to him thoughts of such faithlessness as would never otherwise have occurred to him. For their derision of his predictions cp. Is. v. 19. The *v.* shews that the time is, at any rate, before the capture of Jerusalem at the end of Jehoiakim's reign. If that event had occurred, the people would not, as here, challenge the prophet to point out a fulfilment of his prophecies of woe.

now] not denoting time, but in the sense of *we pray thee*.

16. *I have not hastened from being a shepherd after thee*] The word "shepherd" is not used elsewhere of prophets. Moreover the whole expression is an awkward one. LXX, who seem to have read the Hebrew as it is vocalised in MT., render somewhat vaguely, as though puzzled. On the other hand Aquila and Syr., with much improvement to the parallelism, read (with different vowels) the (one) Hebrew word, rendered here "from being a shepherd," *because of evil*, i.e. I have not pursued thee with persistent supplication to bring calamity on my foes (see ch. ii. 8, with note).

the woeful day] LXX, as mg. *the (judgement) day of man.*

thou knowest] He appeals to God to confirm his protest and support his cause.

was before thy face] was plainly to be seen by Thee.

17. *terror*] a cause of *dismay*. See ch. i. 17, with note. The root occurs as a verb (*dismayed*) twice in the next *v.*

18. *destroy them with double destruction*] lit. as mg. *break them with*

Thus said the LORD unto me: Go, and stand in the gate of ¹the children of the people, whereby the kings of

¹ Or, *the common people* See ch. xxvi. 23.

a double breach. Cp. iv. 6. This may mean a literally twofold punishment, the one part for their apostasy as a nation, the other for their treatment of Jeremiah. It seems more likely however that *double* is merely equivalent to *utter, complete*.

Co. with Du. holds that the imprecation, as in direct opposition to v. 16, stamps this part of the v., or according to him, the whole v. as unauthentic (but see xi. 20). For metrical reasons also he rejects the v., but considers that it has taken the place of a genuine ending to the passage, now lost.

CH. XVII. 19—27. AN EXHORTATION ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

This section is unconnected with the preceding, and, as it considers that the doom pronounced on Judah may be averted on condition of Sabbath observance, while the previous section has declared that that doom is inevitable, it has been placed by some, e.g. Orelli, as early as the time of Josiah's reformation (see introd. note on i. 1—xii. 6), and by others (Stade, Kuenen, Gi., Du., Co.) held to be a piece belonging to the times of Ezra and Nehemiah (cp. Neh. xiii. 15—22). See also on v. 20. The style, however, has much in common with Jeremiah, though this may be asserted to be due to imitation. It is argued that the general tone of the passage, and in particular the appreciation of sacrifice (v. 26) are not what we should expect. On the other hand "although no doubt Jeremiah speaks disparagingly of sacrifice offered by impure hands (vi. 19 f., vii. 9 f., 21—26, xiv. 10—12), it may be questioned whether he would have rejected it when (as is the case explicitly in xvii. 26) it is conceived as the expression of a right heart (cp. xxxiii. 11; also Deut. xii. 11; Is. lvi. 7, lx. 7)." Dr. LOT. p. 258. At any rate, as we see from the Puritans, strong sabbatarianism need not be inconsistent with depreciation of the ceremonial side of worship.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) vv. 19—23. Jehovah tells the prophet to stand at the gate and forbid carriage of goods into and out of the city or houses on the Sabbath. The day is to be hallowed as He has commanded. The people refuse obedience. (ii) vv. 24—27. If they will conform, then they and their rulers shall be immune and permanently secure, and offerings be brought from all the neighbouring parts of Palestine to the Temple. If not, then Jerusalem shall be overthrown.

19. *the gate of the children of the people*] (mg. *the common people*. See ch. xxvi. 23.) The expression is very difficult and probably corrupt. Du. suggests that the gate is one within the city and leading to the palace, thus accounting for its use by both the rulers, and those who sought an audience from them. It is better, however, to take "gate"

Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all
 20 the gates of Jerusalem; and say unto them, Hear ye the
 word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and
 all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these
 21 gates; thus saith the LORD: Take heed ¹to yourselves, and
 bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the
 22 gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of
 your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work:
 but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your
 23 fathers; but they hearkened not, neither inclined their ear,
 but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, and
 24 might not receive instruction. And it shall come to pass,
 if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring
 in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath
 day, but to hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;
 25 then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings and
 princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots
 and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah,

¹ Or, *for your life's sake*

in its ordinary application to a city gate. Peake suggests, by a slight change in MT., to read (as in xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7) *in the gate of Benjamin* (on the N. side of the city). The mention of kings as using it has reference to v. 25. He further suggests that "in all the gates of Jerusalem" may be a gloss. Dr. makes "the gate" to be "apparently (see Ezek. xlv. 1, 3 b, xlv. 1 a, 2) either the outer or inner gate on the east, by which the kings of Judah entered and left the Temple."

20. *kings*] The plural is certainly strange. Cp. the sing. in xxii. 2. As Co. says, we have here not a concrete situation but a model and abstraction.

21. *to yourselves*] rather as mg. *for your life's sake*, Heb. *in your souls*; we should say, *As you value your lives*.

23. Substantially the same as ch. vii. 26.

instruction] *correction*. See on vi. 8.

24—27. See introd. summary to section.

25. *then shall there enter*] Prosperity, permanence, and religious devotion shall be the three characteristic features of the Jewish State, if only they will hallow the Sabbath.

and princes] a virtually certain example of a pre-Septuagintal insertion. Its spuriousness is shewn by the words "their princes," which follow. The insertion has been suggested doubtless by parallel passages (ii. 26, xxv. 18, xxxii. 32, xlv. 17, 21). Cp. on the other hand (for absence of the addition) xiii. 13, xxii. 4.

and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall ¹remain for ever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, ²⁶ and from the places round about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the lowland, and from the mountains, and from the South, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and ²oblations, and frankincense, and bringing *sacrifices of thanksgiving*, unto the house of the LORD. But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath ²⁷ day, and not to bear a burden and enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, ¹⁸ saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there ²

¹ Or, *be inhabited*

² Or, *meal offerings*

26. Cp. for this kind of enumeration xxxii. 44, xxxiii. 13.

the land of Benjamin] lying north of Judah.

the lowland] the low hills and flat valley-land stretching down towards the Philistine plain on the W. and S.W. of Judah.

the mountains] the loftier part S. of Jerusalem in the neighbourhood of Hebron.

the South] See on xiii. 19. The cities in these three districts are enumerated in Josh. xv., viz. 33—44; 48—60; 21—32.

burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and oblations, and frankincense] Three sorts of offerings are here mentioned, two bloody and one unbloody. The "oblations" (mg. "meal offerings") consisted of flour and oil, and had (Lev. ii. 1) frankincense (see on vi. 20) strewn upon them.

sacrifices of thanksgiving] *thanksgiving*. The word "sacrifices," omitted here and in xxxiii. 11, is supplied in the directions given in Lev. vii. 12.

27. *will I kindle...Jerusalem*] These words are based on the refrain Am. i. 3—ii. 5, where they occur seven times. They are found three times later in Jeremiah (xxi. 14, xlix. 27, l. 32). Cp. Hos. viii. 14.

palaces] See on vi. 5.

CH. XVIII. 1—23. THE POTTER AND THE CLAY.

The words and events of chs. xviii.—xx. may all be considered as having vv. 1, 2 for their heading. Ch. xviii. gives and explains the figure of the potter's clay, and adds the effect upon the people. Ch. xix. gives and applies the figure of the potter's broken vessel, while ch. xx. describes the sufferings of Jeremiah in consequence, and his complaints.

3 I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought his work

But, while ch. xx. arises naturally out of the situation in ch. xix., the connexion between the latter and ch. xviii. is purely that which arises from the mention of a potter's vessel in both, and the consequent juxtaposition of the two by an editor of the Book. We should further notice that while xviii. and xix. are pretty certainly, to a large extent, genuine, a considerable amount of later insertion is to be found in both. Such an insertion is the passage xviii. 7—12 (Co. says 5—12, but this extension is unnecessary), inasmuch as those vv. miss the point of the symbol, which is that Jehovah, like the human potter, even when one failure has occurred, cannot be ultimately thwarted, but converts the same material to the shape that He desires. But vv. 7—10 speak of a change in the original intention of the potter, which may involve the permanent rejection of his material. It is quite possible, however, that vv. 7—12 are of Jeremiah's authorship, though not originally belonging to this context. See further in introd. note on ch. xix.

Du. needlessly rejects the whole story, as trivial in its character and moral. Gi. retains all but vv. 11, 12, which he holds to be an insertion by way of linking v. 10 to vv. 13 ff. The hopeful tone of the earlier part of the ch. permits it to be placed in Josiah's time. Vv. 7—17 will belong to a later date.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) vv. 1—17. The LORD bade me go and watch how the potter, when his work was marred, converted the same clay into a perfect vessel. So can Jehovah do for Israel. His decrees, whether for the destruction or the prosperity of a people, are conditional upon their conduct. He now remonstrates with Israel, but they refuse to hearken. Their conduct is not according to nature. Snow fails not on the lofty hills, nor the streams that descend from them. But Israel has gone utterly astray, and shall in its consequent desolation be made a warning to all for ever. Jehovah will put them to flight before their enemies.

(ii) vv. 18—23. Jeremiah's enemies conspire to circulate slanders to his ruin. He appeals to the LORD to protect him, even as he had once interceded on their behalf. But now let death and sudden destruction come upon them; forgive them not.

3. *the potter's house*] The likening (as in v. 6) of man to the clay and God to the potter was familiar. See on v. 4. The trade was a very early one. Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, p. 520) thus describes what he saw at Jaffa (Joppa): "There was the potter sitting at his 'frame,' and turning the 'wheel' with his foot. He had a heap of the prepared clay near him, and a pan of water by his side. Taking a lump in his hand, he placed it on the top of the wheel (which revolves horizontally) and smoothed it into a low cone, like the upper end of a sugar-loaf, then thrusting his thumb into the top of it, he opened a hole down through the centre, and this he constantly widened by pressing the edges of the revolving cone between his hands. As it enlarged and

on the wheels. And when the vessel that he made of the 4
clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it
again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to
make it.

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 5
O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith 6
the LORD. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are
ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I 7
shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom,
to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that 8
nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their
evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto
them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a 9

became thinner, he gave it whatever shape he pleased with the utmost ease and expedition."

the wheels] Two discs, the upper smaller than the lower, were placed on the same vertical axle, and the lower one turned by the foot. Cp. description in Eccclus. xxxviii. 29 f.

4. *in the hand of the potter*] rather, as LXX, *in his hands*, thus avoiding harshness. "The potter" has doubtless crept into MT. from being a marginal gloss. Its admission to the MT. drew with it, through the influence of the wording of v. 6, the addition of the Hebrew for "of the clay," which accordingly is also absent from LXX. For illustrations drawn from the potter's art cp. Is. xxix. 16, xlv. 9, lxiv. 8; Wis. xv. 7; Eccclus. xxxiii. 13. Pe. also compares Browning's *Rabbi Ben-Ezra* (xxv. to end). St Paul's employment of the figure (Rom. ix.—xi.) is quite different from Jeremiah's, as the former uses it in application to God's absolute right to dispose the fortunes of his creatures for good or evil.

6. "First of the prophets, Jeremiah proclaims distinctly what had been more or less implied throughout, that predictions were subject to no overruling necessity, but depended for their fulfilment on the moral state of those to whom they were addressed; that the most confident assurance of blessing could be frustrated by sin; that the most awful warnings of calamity could be averted by repentance." Stanley's *J. Ch.* II. 445. Cp. the story of Jonah, and in Ezekiel (xviii. 21 ff., xxxiii. 12 ff.) the application of the same thought to *individuals*.

7-10. See introd. note.

7. *At what instant*] lit. *Suddenly*. The same word occurs at the beginning of v. 9. The rendering in the two cases probably is *At one moment—at another*. (So Oxf. Heb. Lex.)

8. *I will repent*] speaking after the manner of men. The sense is, *I will alter my treatment*, for among men change of conduct implies change of purpose.

nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant
 10 it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then
 I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit
 11 them. Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah,
 and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the
 LORD: Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a
 device against you: return ye now every one from his evil
 12 way, and amend your ways and your doings. But they
 say, There is no hope: for we will walk after our own
 devices, and we will do every one after the stubbornness
 of his evil heart.

13 Therefore thus saith the LORD: Ask ye now among the
 nations, who hath heard such things; the virgin of Israel
 14 hath done a very horrible thing. Shall the snow of Lebanon
 fail from the rock of the field? *or* shall the cold waters

11. The direct application of the figure to the people here begins.
frame] The Hebrew root is the same as that for *potter*.

amend your ways and your doings] See on ch. vii. 3.

12. *no hope*] It is too late to turn back now. See on ii. 25.
stubbornness] Cp. ch. iii. 17.

13. *Ask ye now among the nations*] Cp. ch. ii. 10 f., v. 30.

the virgin of Israel] The people collectively (see on iv. 11),
 tended with the utmost care by the Almighty, have in spite of it all
 broken through the sanctity which hedged them around. Cp. xiv. 17
 for the collective use of the expression.

14. The unnatural conduct of Israel (cp. viii. 7) is illustrated.

rock of the field] The strangeness of the expression has led to the
 conjectural substitution for "field" (*sâdeh*) of either (a) Shaddai, a title
 of Jehovah (e.g. Gen. xvii. 1), or (b) Sirion (Ps. xxix. 6), the Phœnician
 name (see Deut. iii. 9) for Hermon (so Co. and Du.), which has a
 summit crowned with perpetual snow. In the latter case, as Lebanon
 and Hermon were quite distinct, and as the former seems connected
 with the Hebrew root meaning whiteness, we may render with Co.
 "Does the white snow forsooth melt from the rock of Sirion?"

shall the cold waters...be dried up] mg. *plucked up*, but the emendation
 in the text is doubtless right, and is obtained by the transposition of two
 Hebrew consonants. The earlier part of the clause is more difficult to
 emend. Du., by simply dividing two adjacent words differently, gets
 for "waters that flow down from afar" "waters of the scatterers," viz.
 the northern stars, as bringing rain at the time of their rising. He
 connects the word he renders "scatterers" with the north by reference
 to Job xxxvii. 9, where for the latter there is given in mg. *scattering*
 winds. But we cannot speak with any certainty. The Hebrew for

¹that flow down from afar be ²dried up? For my people ¹⁵ hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity; and they have caused them to stumble in their ways, in the ancient paths, to walk in bypaths, in a way not cast up; to make their land an astonishment, and a perpetual hissing; ¹⁶ every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and shake his head. I will scatter them as with an east wind ¹⁷ before the enemy; I will ³look upon their back, and not their face, in the day of their calamity.

Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against ¹⁸ Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor

¹ Or, of strange lands that flow down be &c. ² Or, plucked up

³ Or, shew them the back, and not the face

“strange” may have come in through the accidental repetition of “cold,” which stands next in the Hebrew, and differs only in the initial letter. The mg. (the cold waters) “of strange lands that flow down be, etc.” is improbable as a rendering. The general sense at any rate is clear. Nature is constant in her operations, but God, the Rock of Israel, is forsaken by those who used to follow Him.

15. *For*] This continues the thought of the 13th v., v. 14 being parenthetic.

vanity] lit. *unreality*, meaning idols, but a different word from that used in ii. 5, where see notes. Here the sense is materially or morally unsubstantial or groundless. See Dr. *Parallel Psalter*, p. 464.

they have caused] The pronoun must refer to the idols (2 Chron. xxviii. 23); but it is better, as the LXX's rendering suggests, to translate *have stumbled*, thus retaining “the people” as the subject.

in the ancient paths] Cp. ch. vi. 16.

not cast up] not raised above the inequalities and obstructions of the adjoining fields.

17. *as with an east wind*] better, perhaps, *as an east wind*.

look upon...their face] mg. *shew them the back, and not the face*, in answer to the people's own behaviour towards Him. See ch. ii. 27. They shall flee for shelter from the enemy as from the sirocco, the scorching wind in Palestine which springs suddenly from the desert in the E. or S.E. Cp. Gen. xli. 6 (“blasted”) and see on Am. iv. 9 in C.B.

18—23. See introd. note to section.

18. *they*] the prophet's enemies, who are plotting against his life. Cp. xi. 18 ff., xii. 1 ff., xv. 10 f., 15 ff.

the law shall not perish...] See on ch. viii. 8. Cp. Ezek. vii. 26 (last part of v.). “The wise” were those who composed such sayings as we

counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

- 19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of
 20 them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember how I stood before thee to speak good for them, to turn away
 21 thy fury from them. Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and give them over to the power of the sword; and let their wives become childless, and widows; and let their men be slain of death, *and* their young men
 22 smitten of the sword in battle. Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid
 23 snares for my feet. Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me; forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight: but let them be¹ overthrown before thee; deal thou with them in the time of thine anger.

¹ Heb. *made to stumble*.

find in Proverbs. The sense is that the people refuse to believe Jeremiah's warnings that the established state of things shall cease.

smite him with the tongue] utter destructive slanders about him. Cp. Am. vii. 10 f.

let us not give heed] LXX omit the negative. The sense would then be, Let us watch him, so as to fasten on him a charge of treason. Cp. xx. 10.

20. *Shall evil be recompensed for good?*] Jeremiah had interceded for the people in times past, e.g. ch. xiv. 7, 21.

21—23. See oh xvii. 18. Here also we may be permitted to consider the passage to be an editorial addition. Erbt retains 22 *b* and 23 as genuine, Gi. all but "*and their...battle*" (v. 21), while Du. and Co. reject the passage, which in its bitter imprecations indeed forms a harsh contrast to the prophet's expressions elsewhere of affectionate mourning for the attitude taken up by his countrymen, as well as to the teaching of the N.T. (Mt. v. 44).

22. The havoc wrought in battle outside the walls is followed by the sacking of the houses of the city.

they have digged a pit...and hid snares] Cp. Ps. lviii. 6.

23. *overthrown*] lit. as mg. *made to stumble*. Cp. vi. 15, 21.

Thus said the LORD, Go, and buy a potter's earthen ¹⁹ bottle, and *take* of the elders of the people, and of the elders of the priests; and go forth unto the valley of the ² son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the ¹gate Harsith,

¹ Or, *the gate of potsherd*s

CHS. XIX. 1—XX. 6. THE SYMBOL OF THE BROKEN VESSEL
AND THE CONSEQUENCES TO THE PROPHET.

See introd. note on ch. xviii. Certain parts of this ch. are probably editorial insertions. See notes below. The date may be placed in Jehoiakim's reign, and, from the distinctness with which Babylon is mentioned (xx. 4) as the source of danger, it probably followed, rather than preceded, the battle of Carchemish (in the 3rd year of his reign, B.C. 605).

The section may be summarized as follows.

(i) *vv. 1, 2.* The LORD bids the prophet take an earthen bottle, and go, accompanied by leading persons, to the valley of Hinnom, and proclaim the message which he shall there receive. (ii) *vv. 3—9.* Calamities which shall shock all who hear of them shall be the punishment of the idolatrous and cruel rites practised in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, abhorrent to Jehovah's mind. The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be put to the sword, and their corpses shall be a prey to birds and beasts. All who see their fate shall be filled with horror and contempt. Lack of food shall drive the besieged to cannibalism. (iii) *vv. 10—13.* Then Jeremiah is to break the bottle, in token of the city's irremediable fate. The houses of Jerusalem, the roofs of which have been defiled by idolatry, shall be even as the unclean Topheth. (iv) *v. 14—xx. 6.* Jeremiah returns to the Temple court, and repeats his warning. Pashhur, chief officer in the Temple, places him in the stocks, and, on setting him free next day, is warned by the prophet of the calamities in which he and the rest of Jerusalem shall soon be involved.

1. *buy a potter's earthen bottle*] The point in ch. xviii. (the potter's clay) was the power of God to alter the destinies of a people at any moment, just as the potter's work (*v. 4*) was made "again another vessel." The special lesson *here* is that there may come a time in the history of a nation when its persistent obduracy shall demand that the only alteration in its destiny shall take the form of breaking, destruction.

take] The word (supplied in LXX) has fallen accidentally out of the Hebrew text.

the elders of the priests] The expression occurs 2 Kgs xix. 2. They are called "the chiefs of the priests" in 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14.

2. *the valley of the son of Hinnom*] See on ch. vii. 31.

the gate Harsith] rather, as mg. *the gate of potsherd*s. Apparently so called from the fragments of broken pottery cast here as refuse

- 3 and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee: and say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place,
 4 the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom they knew not, they and their fathers and the kings of Judah; and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;
 5 and have built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons in the fire for burnt offerings unto Baal; which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my ¹mind:
 6 therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this

¹ Heb. *heart*.

“or perhaps crushed, as it is now, on a flat rock, with heavy stone rollers, into dust from which a cement is made, used for plastering cisterns. The place where this is now done is near the Birket es-Sultan, a pool at the S.W. of the city, in the upper part of what was probably the ancient ‘Valley of Hinnom.’” Dr., who also quotes *Pal. Expl. Fund, Quart. Statement* for 1904, p. 136. It is thought to be identical with the “dung” gate (Neh. ii. 13, iii. 13 f., xii. 31), leading into this valley.

3—9. These *vv.* are probably an editorial insertion, for (a) the message which God was to give the prophet in the valley of Ben-Hinnom (*v.* 2) is here given him (*vv.* 3 ff.) before he goes there, (b) the subject-matter of the passage is drawn to a large extent from other portions of the Book, specially from the last part of ch. vii., (c) as Gi. has pointed out, the style of the LXX rendering differs from that employed elsewhere; so that the Greek was probably added by a later hand, the original translator not having the passage in his copy, (d) the use of the plural “kings” (*v.* 3 and also in xvii. 20) is strange.

3. *his ears shall tingle*] Cp. 2 Kgs xxi. 12.

4. *have estranged*] have refused to recognise its claims.

they and their fathers and the kings of Judah] rather, as LXX, *they and their fathers*; and *the kings of Judah have filled, etc.*, generalizing from Manasseh’s acts (2 Kgs xxi. 16, xxiv. 4).

innocents] not children, the sacrifice of whom is first mentioned in the next verse, but in general innocent persons slain in persecution or by malversation of justice.

5, 6. Substantially identical with ch. vii. 31, 32. See notes there and on ii. 23.

5. *of Baal*] See on ii. 8. *Topheth* is the corresponding word in vii. 31.

place shall no more be called Topheth, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of Slaughter. And I will ¹make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of them that seek their life: and their carcases will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. And I will ⁸make this city an astonishment, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. And I will cause them to eat ⁹the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend, in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their life, shall straiten them. Then shalt thou ¹⁰break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: ¹¹Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury in Topheth, ²till there be no place to bury. Thus will I do unto this place, saith the ¹²

¹ Heb. *empty out*. ² Or, *because there shall be no place else*

7. *make void*] lit. as mg. *empty out*. The Hebrew verb is that from which is derived the word for "bottle" in *v.* 1. It has been thought that Jeremiah here suited the action to the word, and poured out the contents on the ground, as he spoke. The latter part of the *v.* is taken from *vii.* 33.

9. The *v.* is taken from Deut. xxviii. 53. Cp. Levit. xxvi. 29. For the fulfilment see Lam. iv. 10.

10—13. See introd. summary to section. *V.* 10 links on to *v.* 2. This and the next sub-section (*v.* 14—xx. 6) are thought to be taken from the memoirs of Jeremiah by Baruch (see Intr. pp. xli. f.), as in them the prophet is spoken of in the third person.

"The people...have the same custom of breaking a jar, when they wish to express their utmost detestation of any one. They come behind or near him, and smash the jar to atoms, thus imprecating upon him and his a like hopeless ruin." Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 641.

11. *and they shall bury...to bury*] The absence of connexion shews this (not found in LXX) to be an insertion from *vii.* 32. Gi. and Schmidt omit the clause and onwards to end of *v.* 13.

12. As Topheth had been made unclean (2 Kgs xxiii. 10) by Josiah, so shall the houses of Jerusalem be.

- LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, even making this
 13 city as Topheth: and the houses of Jerusalem, and the
 houses of the kings of Judah, which are defiled, shall be
 as the place of Topheth, even all the houses upon whose
 roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven,
 and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.
 14 Then came Jeremiah from Topheth, whither the LORD
 had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of
 15 the LORD's house, and said to all the people: Thus saith
 the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring
 upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I
 have pronounced against it; because they have made their
 neck stiff, that they might not hear my words.
 20 Now Pashhur the son of Immer the priest, who was

13. *upon whose roofs*] Cp. xxxii. 29; 2 Kgs xxiii. 12 (in which place the meaning probably is "on the roof [of the Temple]"); Zeph. i. 5. These were used for festivals (Jud. xvi. 27), for conference (1 Sam. ix. 25 f.), for exercise (2 Sam. xi. 2), for booths at the feast of tabernacles (Neh. viii. 16), for public announcements (Matt. x. 27), and for prayer (Acts x. 9).

14—xx. 6. See introd. summary to section.

14. Jeremiah has now returned from the fulfilment of his commission.

15. *all her towns*] all the others belonging to Judah. Cp. xxxiv. 1. *have made their neck stiff*] See on vii. 26.

xx. 1. *Now Pashhur the son of Immer the priest*] The name seems to have been a common one. In xxi. 1 and xxxviii. 1 a P. "son of Malchiah" is mentioned, and in the latter v. we find a third (possibly, however, identical with the present one), who was father of Gedaliah. Doubt has been thrown on the authentic character of this passage, inasmuch as in later times Immer (Ezra ii. 37, x. 20; Neh. vii. 40, xi. 13) and apparently Pashhur (see on Ezra ii. 38 in C.B.) were the names of priestly families, while in Jeremiah they are personal names. Moreover, since in B.C. 537 the priestly house of Immer was 1052 strong (Ezra ii. 37 and so Neh. vii. 40), it cannot have been named after the father of this P. But "son of Immer," as Co. points out, may only mean a member of the family named after him as ancestor. Du. maintains that there is no room for the P. of the text here, as xxix. 26 shews that the predecessor of the Zephaniah, there mentioned as holding the same office, was not P. but Jehoiada. Erbt, on the other hand, points out that the office need not be the same, for in lii. 24 we find that Zephaniah is but one of several officers of the Temple, and so, at the time to which xxix. 26 belongs, may have been the chief of the three

chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. Then Pashhur smote Jeremiah ² the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper gate of Benjamin, which was in the house of the LORD. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashhur ³ brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashhur, but ¹Magor-missabib. For thus saith the LORD, ⁴ Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword. Moreover I will give all the riches of this city, and ⁵ all the gains thereof, and all the precious things thereof, yea, all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon. And thou, Pashhur, ⁶ and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die,

¹ That is, *Terror on every side.*

“keepers of the door,” and not successor to the office here held by Pashhur.

chief officer] lit. *overseer, ruler*, but the latter word in MT. “is probably a gloss, identifying Jeremiah’s ‘overseer’ (see xxix. 26) with the ‘ruler’ often mentioned in later times in connexion with the Temple, 1 Chr. ix. 11 (= Neh. xi. 11); 2 Chr. xxxi. 13, xxxv. 8.” Dr.

² *the stocks*] Cp. xxix. 26. See HDB. I. 527 for anything that is known with reference to this mode of punishment as applied then.

upper gate of Benjamin, which was in, etc.] the northern gate (built by Jotham, 2 Kgs xv. 35) of the upper (inner) court of the Temple, and to be distinguished from the *city* gate of the same name (xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7).

³ *Magor-missabib*] meaning, *terror on every side*. The LXX wrongly render, *foreigner*, obtaining this sense from the fact that the Hebrew roots for *terror* and *sojourn in a foreign country* are identical in form. The name is to be significant of his fate, which doubtless was to go into exile with Jehoiachin, as well as of the consternation of himself and his friends at the failure of their policy of reliance on Egypt against Chaldaea. For the expression cp. v. 10, vi. 25, xlvi. 5, xlix. 29; Lam. ii. 22, and for the protest on the part of the prophet cp. Is. xxii. 15 ff.; Am. vii. 10 ff.; Acts xvi. 37.

and there shalt thou be buried, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied falsely.

7 O LORD, thou hast ¹deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am become

¹ Or, *enticed*

6. *prophesied falsely*] He thus would appear to have assumed the functions of a prophet, and to have insisted that the warnings of Jeremiah were absurd. See xiv. 13 ff.

CH. XX. 7—18. THE PROPHET BITTERLY COMPLAINS TO GOD
OF HIS LOT.

The passage opens to us the depths of the prophet's soul, and we see him in intimate converse with God, and possessed now by the emotions of despair, and now by confident hope. We have here the thoughts, as Gi. and Co. observe, which may well have occupied his mind when in confinement, and vv. 7—13 at any rate are thus closely connected both in time and subject-matter with vv. 1—6. As derision was still the prophet's fate (v. 7), they can hardly be later than the early part of Jehoiakim's reign, when the hope that danger would be averted was still prevalent. On the other hand vv. 14—18 most naturally belong to the latter days of Zedekiah, when the prophet stood alone, hated as the enemy of his people and a traitor to his country.

It may be summarized thus.

(i) vv. 7—10. O LORD, Thou hast beguiled me. My human weakness cannot cope with the Divine strength. Perforce I utter Thy message, and therefore am become an object of perpetual scorn. Yet that message, whatever I may resolve to the contrary, insists on utterance. Denunciation, craft, revenge—even my intimates employ these weapons against me. (ii) vv. 11—13. After all, I have Jehovah on my side. My foes shall be put to perpetual shame. May He, who searches my heart and theirs, grant me to see their discomfiture. Praise be to Him for deliverance. (iii) vv. 14—18. Accursed be the day of my birth and he who announced it. May his doom be terrible as that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Why did he not cut me off from life ere I was born? Wherefore was I, wretched man that I am, given a share in human existence?

7—9. These vv. shew us that the prophets did not speak of their own will. It was an influence which they could not resist that urged them forward, in spite of the certain ills that should follow to themselves. "Here there rings out clearly the prophet's unfaltering certainty of the real inspiration which is the source of all his message." Pe. Cp. xxiii. 29; so Amos iii. 8 and 1 Cor. ix. 16.

7. *deceived*] mg. *enticed*; induced him to undertake duties, the gravity of which together with the resulting sufferings was hidden from him. Cp. use of the same Hebrew word in Prov. i. 10, xvi. 29.

a laughingstock all the day, every one mocketh me. For 8
 as often as I speak, I cry out; I cry, Violence and spoil:
 because the word of the LORD is made a reproach unto me,
 and a derision, all the day. And if I say, I will not make 9
 mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then
 there is in mine heart as it were a burning fire shut up in
 my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot
contain. For I have heard the defaming of many, terror 10
 on every side. Denounce, and we will denounce him, *say*
 all my familiar friends, they that watch for my halting; per-
 adventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against
 him, and we shall take our revenge on him. But the LORD 11
 is with me as a mighty one *and* a terrible: therefore my
 persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they
 shall be greatly ashamed, because they have not ¹dealt
 wisely, even with an everlasting dishonour which shall
 never be forgotten. But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the 12
 righteous, that seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy
 vengeance on them; for unto thee have I revealed my
 cause. Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he 13
 hath delivered the soul of the needy from the hand of evil-
 doers.

¹ Or, *prospered*

8. *Violence and spoil*] directed generally against himself. Cp. v. 26—28, ix. 4.

a reproach unto me, and a derision] Words applied to his own case by the great Florentine, Savonarola, "I have had nothing but tribulations, derision, and reproach." Clark's *Savonarola*, p. 169.

9. *make mention*] rather, *think thereon*, i.e. on "the word."

I am weary with forbearing] rather, as in vi. 11, "weary with holding in."

10. *defaming*] lit. probably, *whispering*. Cp. Ps. xxxi. 13.

watch for my halting] Cp. Ps. xxxv. 15, xxxviii. 17.

enticed] into some act, which will lay him open to attack.

11—13. See summary at commencement of section. The prophet's courage is renewed.

11. *dealt wisely*] mg. *prospered*. The Hebrew word includes the notion of success as the result of wise action.

12. Virtually identical with xi. 20 and therefore here perhaps an insertion from the margin of a Hebrew MS.

13. This exclamation of praise may be compared with those which

14 Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day
 15 wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the
 man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man
 16 child is born unto thee; making him very glad. And let
 that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew, and
 repented not: and let him hear a cry in the morning, and
 17 ¹shouting at noontide; because he slew me not from the
 womb; and so my mother should have been my grave,
 18 and her womb always great. Wherefore came I forth out
 of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should
 be consumed with shame?

¹ Or, *an alarm*

break out from time to time in the course, or at the conclusion, of many even among the most mournful and despondent of the Psalms, e.g. xxxv. 9, 10, 28.

14—18. See summary at commencement of section. Cp. Job iii. 3—12. The latter passage is even more vehement than this and also bears traces of artificiality as compared with this natural and spontaneous outburst of a deeply moved human soul. We can hardly therefore doubt that the Job passage is based upon this one and not *vice versa*. The words express in the intense language of Eastern emotions the bitterness of the pangs which ever and again seized upon the prophet's mind and heart, as he contemplated his position and that of his country. Cp. 2 Sam. i. 21.

14. "The days of the year are not for the Hebrew mind mere marks of time, they are objective entities, each of which in its turn visits the world (cp. the twelve months in the fairy tale)." Pe.

15. "No man of course can curse his father or his mother, so Jeremiah curses the messenger, who brought the joyful news from the women's quarters." Du.

16. *let that man, etc.* Du. and Co. object to so much being made of the messenger, and therefore consider that for "man" we should substitute, or at any rate understand, "day" of the previous v. The meaning then would be, Let that day assuredly bring disaster. But the change is unnecessary. The text only expresses a counterpart of the Eastern custom of rewarding the messenger who brought good tidings.

the cities] Cp. Is. xiii. 19.

cry] Cp. xviii. 22.

shouting] mg. *an alarm*, the same Hebrew word as that rendered "alarm" in iv. 19.

17. *from*] better (with LXX), as shewn by the context, *in*. The consonants which represent the two prepositions were written similarly in Hebrew MSS.

The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, 21 when king Zedekiah sent unto him Pashhur the son of Malchijah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest,

CH. XXI. 1—14. JEREMIAH'S WARNING AS TO THE ISSUE OF THE SIEGE.

We here commence a new division of the whole Book. The substance of the roll of ch. xxxvi. has been given in the preceding chapters, while fragments of the same are doubtless included in this portion. We here pass suddenly from the time of Jehoiakim to that of Zedekiah the last king of Judah, and the occasion on which (*v.* 4) the city was attacked by the Chaldaeans (see *Intr.* p. xvii.). It may have been inserted here thus early merely because of the mention of a Pashhur in *v.* 1, though not the same person as in *xx.* 1. The prophet in this and the three following chapters declares that the successive crimes of kings, prophets, and priests, which he speaks of in detail, have secured for Judah the unenviable fate now visibly at hand, while there appear however from time to time gleams of brighter things. Chs. xxi., xxii. describe the sins of the successive kings, xxiii. 1—8 gives expression to Messianic hopes, xxiii. 9—40 sharply rebukes prophets and priests, xxiv. shews under the similitude of baskets of figs the rottenness to which the State has now under Zedekiah been reduced.

A similar incident to that described in *vv.* 1—7 is found in xxxvii. 3—10. Du. rejects both accounts as unhistorical. Others (e.g. Stade) make them refer to the same occasion. It is, however, much more probable (so Co. and Gi.) that Zedekiah appealed twice to the prophet for advice under circumstances somewhat similar, but at different stages in the siege. This was the earlier stage. In ch. xxxvii. there had come a confident hope among the people that the raising of the siege by the Chaldaeans owing to the threatened arrival of the Egyptian army would prove permanent. Accordingly, while the general tone of Jeremiah's answers is the same in both cases, its wording is adapted to the respective circumstances. The ch. naturally falls into four parts; (*a*) *vv.* 1—7, the message, and the prophet's reply; (*b*) *vv.* 8—10 (perhaps not originally forming part of the reply, but at any rate dating from the same period), advice to the people as to their conduct under the impending fate of the city; (*c*) *vv.* 11, 12 (see notes there), advice to the house of David; (*d*) *vv.* 13, 14 (a detached fragment; see notes), disaster shall come to the inhabitress of the vale and rock of the plain. We may add that (*a*) and (*b*) are probably from the hand of Baruch, and that *vv.* 3—10 are in a kind of poetic prose.

1. *Pashhur the son of Malchijah*] See on *xx.* 1.

Zephaniah] (see also on *xx.* 1) mentioned again *xxix.* 25, *xxxvii.* 3, *lii.* 24. Both he and Pashhur doubtless belonged to the party who were for refusing to recognise and submit to Nebuchadnezzar's overwhelming power, and thus were politically hostile to Jeremiah. For the general situation cp. 2 Kgs xix. 1 (*Is.* xxxvii. 1 ff.).

- 2 saying, Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us: peradventure the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.
- 3 Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to
- 4 Zedekiah: Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans which besiege you, without the walls, and
- 5 I will gather them into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.
- 6 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and
- 7 beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, even such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that

the priest] These words belong to Zephaniah not Maaseiah. Cp. xxii. 11.

2. *Nebuchadrezzar*] This is a nearer approach than Nebuchadnezzar to the correct spelling of the word and is always found in the MT. of this Book except in chs. xxvii.—xxix. (where see introd. note). Nabukudurri-uzur (“O Nebo, defend the landmark”) presents perhaps the nearest sound in English writing.

his wondrous works] perhaps referring to the event recorded in 2 Kgs xix. 35.

go up] raise the siege. Cp. xxxiv. 21.

4. There is here a suspicious harshness of expression, and Co. on that account omits the *v*. The harshness is diminished, though not quite removed, if we omit (with LXX) “and I will gather them.” The Jews shall no longer be able, as at present, to make sallies on the besiegers.

5. *with an outstretched...arm*] a phrase of Deut. (iv. 34, v. 15, xxvi. 8).

7. The Hebrew form of the *v*. is evidently an expansion. The LXX read “from the famine into the hand of those that seek, etc.,” omitting the intermediate words.

the pestilence] This would be a natural consequence of the overcrowding of the city on account of the siege.

seek their life : and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword ; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy. And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the 8 LORD : Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, 9 and by the famine, and by the pestilence : but he that goeth out, and falleth away to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey. For 10 I have set my face upon this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD : it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

And touching the house of the king of Judah, hear ye 11 the word of the LORD : O house of David, thus saith the 12 LORD, Execute judgement in the morning, and deliver the

with the edge of the sword] lit. *according to the mouth of the sword*, i.e. relentlessly, without quarter.

8—10. See introd. note to section. Owing to such advice Jeremiah was later charged with lack of patriotism, and in fact with treachery (xxxvii. 13 ff., xxxviii. 2 ff.).

8. *the way of life and the way of death]* Somewhat similar expressions in Deut. (xxx. 15, 19, or, more probably, the words of xi. 26, though the language there is a less close parallel) may have suggested these words to Jeremiah. "Life," however, here does not mean prosperity, as there, but the mere avoidance of death.

9. *for a prey]* something snatched up hurriedly and borne away with him rather than his secure possession. For the phrase cp. xxxviii. 2, xxxix. 18, xlv. 5.

10. *I have set my face upon this city]* Cp. xlv. 11; Amos ix. 4. The phrase occurs in a good sense in xxiv. 6.

11, 12. See note introductory to section. These *vv.* are quite out of connexion with either the preceding or following. They are made up of xxii. 3 and iv. 4, and seem to be a fragment of Jeremiah, but here misplaced. They refer to an earlier time, when reformation might still be looked for.

11. *And touching]* rather, *And to...Judah*, adding *thou shalt say*, apparently fallen out in the Hebrew. Otherwise we should omit *And* and make "Touching..." a title to what follows. Cp. xxiii. 9.

12. *Execute judgement in the morning]* An important part of the king's duties was personally to hear and adjudicate upon cases in the open space at the city gate. Cp. 2 Sam. xv. 2—4.

in the morning] probably, *every morning*; so Amos iv. 4, and cp. Ps. ci. 8. It was the ordinary time for business, while it was still cool.

spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because
 13 of the evil of ¹your doings. Behold, I am against thee, O
²inhabitant of the valley, ³and of the rock of the plain, saith
 the LORD; ye which say, Who shall come down against us?
 14 or who shall enter into our habitations? and I will punish
 you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the LORD:
 and I will kindle a fire in her forest, and it shall devour all
 that is round about her.

¹ Another reading is, *their*.

² Heb. *inhabitrress*.

³ Or, and *rock*

13, 14. See introd. note to section. The fragment is a very obscure one. It may be connected with xxii. 8f. It was evidently held by the compiler who placed it here to refer to Jerusalem. But that city is not in a "valley," nor is it upon a "rock" rising out of a tableland "plain." Neither can a foe be said to "come down" upon it. Dr. suggests that, as the word rendered "plain" is commonly used of the tableland upon which the principal cities of Moab lay (see xlviii. 8, 21), it is possible that the *v.* was originally written with reference to some other city.

13. *inhabitant*] lit. as mg. *inhabitrress*, i.e. the feminine used collectively for the body of the inhabitants. See iv. 31, vi. 2, vii. 29, xiv. 17.

habitations] *lairs*. The word suggests the haunts of wild beasts, in which they are secure. Cp. Ps. civ. 22; Nah. ii. 12 ("dens").

14. *and I will kindle, etc.*] Cp. on xvii. 27.

in her forest] i.e. Jerusalem, which is likened to a forest about to be wholly consumed by fire. For the same figure, representing in that case the people of Israel, cp. Is. ix. 18. The expression does not mean literal trees, of which there was nothing like a forest in the neighbourhood of the city, but denotes either the houses clustering together like a forest, or, more generally, the beauty and grandeur of the place. Cp. for the general sense note on *Gilead, etc.* ch. xxii. 6; also Is. x. 34, where Sennacherib, king of Assyria, is likened to "the thickets of the forest," and to "Lebanon."

CHS. XXII. 1—XXIII. 8. JUDGEMENTS ON THE KINGS OF JUDAH OF THE PERIOD.

The compiler has brought together Jeremiah's utterances of various dates on successive kings. They form a mixture of poetic and prose elements, and contain some amount of editorial matter. The section may be subdivided as follows. (i) xxii. 1—5. Jeremiah is sent to the palace by Jehovah to bid the king and his subjects of all classes to

Thus said the LORD: Go down to the house of the king ²² of Judah, and speak there this word, and say, Hear the word ² of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates. Thus saith the LORD: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence, to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, ⁴ then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting ¹ upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on

¹ Heb. *for David upon his throne.*

practise justice and to abstain from their various wrong doings. On their compliance the State shall prosper. Otherwise the palace shall be laid in ruins. (ii) *vv.* 6—9. Under the figure of the destruction of noble forests, the overthrow of the monarchy is foretold. Other nations, astonished, shall learn the reason, viz. idolatry. (iii) *vv.* 10—12. Prediction of Jehoahaz's exile and death. (iv) *vv.* 13—19. Contrast of Jehoiakim's selfish exactions and luxury with the upright rule of Josiah. Prediction of the fate of the former. (v) *vv.* 20—30. Lament, O people, for the loss of thy lovers. Thy sufferings, the result of thy faithlessness, shall be great. Jehoiachin shall be carried captive to Babylon and shall die in hopeless exile, despised and having no successor. (vi) *xxiii.* 1—4. Jehovah denounces the rulers of Judah, and promises to raise up faithful rulers in their stead. (vii) *vv.* 5—8. Prosperity shall be attained under a righteous King of David's line, and there shall be a return of exiles so glorious as to eclipse even the memories of the Exodus.

1—9 form a general introduction to the prophecies concerning individual kings. They bear marks of a later hand, whether that of Baruch or a subsequent editor. *Vv.* 2 f. are closely akin to *xxi.* 11 f. as well as to *xvii.* 19 ff. (see introd. note on the question of the genuineness of that section). Co. considers the commonplace character of the utterance in general, as well as the style of the prediction in *v.* 4, to be suspicious. Moreover, in *vv.* 1—5 there is still room for the averting of doom. In 6—9 this is no longer the case. Thus the component parts of the passage are not homogeneous as to date. See further in individual notes.

1. *Go down*] from the Temple on the eastern hill of Jerusalem to the king's house, which was S. of it on lower ground. Cp. *xxxvi.* 10—12; *2 Kgs.* xi. 19.

2. Cp. *xvii.* 20.

4. Cp. *xvii.* 25.

upon the throne of David] lit. as mg. *for David upon his throne.*

- 5 horses, he, and his servants, and his people. But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that
 6 this house shall become a desolation. For thus saith the LORD ¹concerning the house of the king of Judah: Thou art Gilead unto me, *and* the head of Lebanon: *yet* surely I will make thee a wilderness, *and* cities which are not inhabited.
 7 And I will ²prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down thy choice cedars,
 8 and cast them into the fire. And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city?
 9 Then they shall answer, Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.
 10 Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no
 11 more, nor see his native country. For thus saith the LORD

¹ Or, *unto*² Heb. *sanctify*.

5. *I swear by myself*] For comment on this as the most solemn and binding form of oath, see Heb. vi. 13—18. The form is repeated in xlix. 13, and occurs besides in Gen. xxii. 16; Is. xlv. 23, and a cognate expression is found Jer. li. 14; Am. vi. 8.

6—9. See introd. summary to section. We may take vv. 6, 7 (which are in *Kinah* metre) to be in the main genuine, although (Co.) the statement that they concern the palace is somewhat inconsistent with the general tenor of the passage, which evidently refers to the city as a whole. Vv. 8, 9 are generally thought to be inserted by a later hand. They are almost identical with Deut. xxix. 24 f. and are not in any distinct metre.

6. *concerning*] if there is any preference, better as mg. *unto*.

Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon] well-wooded regions. Cp. Is. ii. 13, xxxvii. 24; Zech. xi. 1 f.

7. *prepare*] lit. as mg. *sanctify*. See on vi. 4, and cp. Is. xiii. 3. *thy choice cedars*] the chief men of the State.

10—12. See introd. summary to section. After Josiah's death at the battle of Megiddo (B.C. 608), Jehoahaz, though not the eldest son (see Intr. pp. xiv. f.), was chosen to succeed him, but after three months was dethroned by Pharaoh-nechoh, and carried off to Egypt, where he died (2 Kgs xxiii. 33 ff.). The passage was evidently written very soon after the dethronement.

This is the first of the passages which treat consecutively of the three immediate predecessors of Zedekiah. The sense of the passage is that even the fate of Josiah, who at any rate reigned in prosperity and

touching ¹Shallum the son of Josiah, king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place: He shall not return thither any more; but in the ¹² place whither they have led him captive, there shall he die, and he shall see this land no more.

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, ¹³ and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not his hire; that saith, ¹⁴ I will build me a wide house and spacious chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. Shalt thou reign, because thou ¹⁵

¹ In 2 Kings xxiii. 30, *Jehoahaz*. Compare 1 Chr. iii. 15.

uprightness for more than thirty years, was preferable to that of his successor. *V. 10* is in *Kinah* metre, while *11* and *12* are not metrical. For this reason, and because their contents would be superfluous information to contemporaries, Du. and Co. consider them a later addition.

11. *Shallum*] See Intr. p. xiv. Shallum was probably the name which he bore before his accession. Other hypotheses to account for the name being here given to Jehoahaz are unlikely, e.g. (i) that it had reference to the shortness of his reign, as alluding to Shallum king of Israel, who was king for one month (2 Kings xv. 13), or (ii) that it means the requited one (from the sense of the Hebrew root), him whom God had marked out for punishment.

Jehoahaz had represented the anti-Egyptian policy, which Jeremiah had always urged. This adds point to the prophet's lament for him.

13—19. See introd. summary to section. It probably belongs to the early years of Jehoiakim, but see on *vv. 18, 19*.

13. *that buildeth his house by unrighteousness*] Jehoiakim, as though it were not enough to involve the land in a heavy tribute to the king of Egypt (2 Kgs xxiii. 35), exacted forced labour from his own subjects that he might have a sumptuous palace built for himself.

chambers] **upper chambers**, and so in *v. 14*. They were on the flat roof of the house, had latticed windows (see 2 Kgs i. 2), and so enjoyed free circulation of air.

14. There is considerable variance between MT. and LXX in this *v.*, but the general sense is clear.

windows] The Hebrew word is unusual in its form. Michaelis by a different division of words, renders *...his windows, cieling it, etc.*, i.e. covering (it) in, panelling (it), as "cieling" meant when A.V. was made. "Painted" will then become *painting*.

vermilion] formerly obtained from the *kermes* insect; hence its name (*vermiculus*).

15. *Shalt thou reign*] Dost thou think that ostentation and luxury constitute a king?

¹strivest to excel in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgement and justice? then it was well with him.
 16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was
 17 well. Was not this to know me? saith the LORD. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy ²covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!
 19 He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

¹ Or, *viest with the cedar*

² Or, *dishonest gain*

strivest to excel in cedar] mg. (less well), *viest with the cedar*. For "cedar" LXX (supported by the Arabic) have *Ahaz* (the two words resembling one another in Hebrew), but Codex A (Alexandrinus) of the LXX reads *Ahab*, apparently with a reference to 1 Kgs xxii. 39, and Co. (*Heb.* p. 62) accepts this as the original, on the ground that the context requires a proper name.

thy father] Josiah.

eat and drink, etc.] enjoyed life, but did not omit the fulfilment of the duties for which, as king, he was responsible.

17. *covetousness*] better as mg. *dishonest gain*. Jehoiakim "remained fixed in the recollections of his countrymen, as the last example of those cruel, selfish, luxurious princes, the natural product of Oriental monarchies, the disgrace of the monarchy of David." (Stanley, *J. Ch.* II. 448.)

18, 19. The prediction of the circumstances attendant upon his death. Cp. xxxvi. 30, the similarity of which makes it probable that these were among the "many like words" which were added to the original form of the Roll (xxxvi. 32) as read to Jehoiakim, and would thus probably be later than the rest of the passage. The prediction was doubtless fulfilled, or it would not have been included in Jeremiah's prophecies as edited. It is true that we read 2 Kgs xxiv. 6 that Jehoiakim "slept with his fathers," but mention of his burial is significantly omitted.

18. *Ah my brother! or, Ah sister!*] given as the usual formulae in lamenting a death (see 1 Kgs xiii. 30). The second is here inappropriate, but it satisfies the parallelism of the *Ḳinah* metre of the whole passage.

Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!] the lamentations of subjects and friends, those outside his family.

19. *buried with the burial of an ass*] i.e. as the succeeding words explain, *cast forth dishonoured*.

Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in ²⁰ Bashan: and cry from Abarim; for all thy lovers are destroyed. I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will ²¹ not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice. The wind shall ¹feed all thy ²² shepherds, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness. O ²inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, ²³ how greatly to be pitied shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail! As I live, ²⁴

¹ Or, *feed upon*² Heb. *inhabitress*.³ Some ancient versions have, *how wilt thou groan*.

20—30. See introd. summary to section. *Vv.* 20—23 have no direct connexion with those that follow and seem to have been introduced here on account of the reference to the rulers ("shepherds") in *v.* 22. The address is to the people, the fem. sing. being used collectively. See on xxi. 13. They are called upon to wail, ascending (that their cry might be widespread) the heights which the Chaldaean hosts would successively pass in their advance southwards upon Jerusalem, viz. Lebanon in the N., the hills of Bashan (Ps. lxxviii. 15 f.) in the N.E., and Abarim in the S.E. For wailing on heights cp. iii. 21, vii. 29; Is. xv. 2.

20. *Abarim*] a range of mountains to the south-east of Palestine. They included Nebo, from which Moses viewed the land (Numb. xxvii. 12; Deut. xxxii. 49).

thy lovers] The reference is not clear. The word may indicate either the false gods worshipped by Israel (cp. xlviii. 7, xlix. 3), or (see on iv. 30) Egypt and the other nations, with whom many of the people were disposed to unite against the Chaldaean power.

22. *feed*] mg. *feed upon*, but rather *shepherd*, so as to preserve the play on words in the Heb.

shepherds] See on ii. 8. Thy leaders, in whom thou hast confidence, shall be driven like a flock into exile by the wind of adversity.

thy lovers] perhaps inserted from *v.* 20, as being here superfluous from the metrical point of view.

23. "Judah has been as confident of safety as a bird that had fixed its nest far away from men in the cedars on the heights of Lebanon." Pe.

inhabitant] For mg. *inhabitress* see on xxi. 13.

how greatly to be pitied] The mg. *how wilt thou groan* is probably the right reading (so LXX, Syr. and Targ. The MT. is a not unnatural corruption arising from a transposition of two consonants).

24—30. The judgement on Jehoiachin. This part of the sub-section may also be subdivided, inasmuch as in 24—27 he has yet to be taken

saith the LORD, though ¹Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I
 25 pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them of whom thou art afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of
 26 Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.
 27 But to the land whereunto ²their soul longeth to return, 28 thither shall they not return. Is this man Coniah a despised broken ³vessel? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into the
 29 land which they know not? O ⁴earth, earth, earth, hear the

¹ In ch. xxiv. 1, and 1 Chr. iii. 16, *Jeconiah*. In 2 Kings xxiv. 6, 8, *Jehoiachin*. ² Heb. *they lift up their soul*. ³ Or, *pot* ⁴ Or, *land*

to Babylon, while in 28—30 that event is spoken of as in the past. The verb in v. 28 can be taken, however, as a *prophetic perfect*, implying certainty of fulfilment.

24. *Coniah*] Cp. xxxvii. 1; called also *Jeconiah* (both names meaning, Jehovah is firm, enduring) xxiv. 1, xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2; 1 Chron. iii. 16; Esth. ii. 6, and *Jehoiachin* (Jehovah appointeth) lii. 31; 2 Kgs xxiv. 6, etc.; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 8. The change to *Jehoiachin*, as in the case of his uncle Jehoahaz (see on v. 11), was probably made on his accession to the throne.

king of Judah] shewing that he was still on the throne.

signet] even though he were as dear to Jehovah as a precious stone, set by way of seal in a signet ring, is to the owner. See 2 Kgs xxiv. 9; also Ezek. xix. 5—9, where he is likened to a young lion that “devoured men” and “laid waste their cities.”

25. The diffuseness of this v., though somewhat less conspicuous in LXX, renders it rather suspicious. Du., Co. and Gi. all reject it.

26. *thy mother*] See on xiii. 18.

and there shall ye die] For his history in exile see lii. 31 ff.; 2 Kgs xxv. 27 ff.

27. *their soul longeth*] For mg. *they lift up their soul* cp. xlv. 14; Deut. xxiv. 15; Hos. iv. 8. The soul was considered the seat of desire.

28. *vessel*] mg. *pot*, but rather, “a terra-cotta figurine,” *Encycl. Bibl.* iii. 3818, quoted by Dr.

wherein is no pleasure] For the expression cp. xlviii. 38; Hos. viii. 8.

29. *O earth, earth, earth*] better as mg. *land*. For the threefold

word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man ³⁰ childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

Woe unto the shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep ²³ of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the ² LORD, the God of Israel, against the shepherds that feed my people: Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. And I will gather the ³

repetition cp. vii. 4. Du. however rejects this and the following *v.* on the ground that the emphatic introduction is unnatural, especially as Jeremiah, according to him, would not be further interested as to the king's fate in exile. Co. also omits 29, but retains most of 30.

30. *Write ye*] For the word in the sense of enter in a register of citizens cp. Is. iv. 3; Ps. lxxxvii. 6.

childless] In 1 Chron. iii. 17, etc. he appears to have had children, and Shealtiel (Matt. i. 12) is reckoned as his son. Shealtiel was, however, descended from David through his son Nathan (Lk. iii. 27—31) and not through the line of the kings (Solomon, Rehoboam, etc.), and thus was only counted to Jehoiachin ("Jechoniah" of Matt. i. 12) according to the *legal* not the *natural* line. It was thus at any rate true that no child of Jehoiachin succeeded to the throne.

xxiii. 1—8. See introd. summary to section. We should have expected, as the natural sequel to the three preceding passages, a direct reference to the reign of Zedekiah. Probably we may attribute the absence of it to Jeremiah's unwillingness to attack one whom he recognised as merely a weak tool in the hands of the princes, the "shepherds" of *v.* 1. But see further on *vv.* 5—8.

Du. and Erbt make the whole passage to be late, while individual parts have been disputed, e.g. 7, 8 by Gi. and with some hesitation by Co. Others than Du. reject the most striking *vv.*, viz. 5, 6, but Co. (so Gi.) emphatically maintains their genuineness. See notes below.

1. *the shepherds*] See on ii. 8, xxii. 22, and for the figure of sheep cp. Ps. lxxiv. 1, xcv. 7, c. 3; Ezek. xxxiv. 31.

2. *feed*] Heb. *shepherd*. Cp. iii. 15.

scattered] by exile, voluntary or forced, in Egypt or Babylon.

driven them away] the opposite of that which is an Eastern shepherd's duty, viz. to go before his flock, leading them to pasture or fold (Is. xl. 11; John x. 3 f.).

visited...visit upon] The twofold sense of the Hebrew word is kept up in the English. Because the shepherds have not visited their flock for good, they shall themselves be visited with punishment.

3, 4 are considered by Co., but quite needlessly, to reflect a position

remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and
 4 they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith the LORD.

5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous ¹Branch, and he shall reign as king

¹ Or, *Shoot* Or, *Bud*

of affairs which was later than Jeremiah's date. The same critic, however, retains, though somewhat doubtfully, 7, 8, against which he might have brought the same objection. Moreover, the words "be fruitful and multiply" (see on iii. 16) are not decisive against the genuineness of the *v.* here.

3. *folds*] rather, "homestead," as Dr. Cp. x. 25, xxv. 30.

4. *shepherds*] The picture is probably that of righteous rulers, such as princes and judges, placed in authority under the ideal king. Cp. Is. i. 26, xxxii. 1.

lacking] missing, like sheep which in the absence of the shepherd have become the prey of wild beasts.

5—8. Du. and others reject these *vv.*, which are also viewed with suspicion by Co. The use of the term "the Shoot" for the Messiah by Zechariah (Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12) shews that in his time it was an established expression, and therefore might naturally be employed as early as pre-exilic times in connexion with Messianic expectations which were even then current. Moreover, there can be little doubt that "our righteousness" (Heb. *Šidkenu*) is an appellation chosen by the prophet as hinting (see on *vv.* 1—8) at the name of the reigning king, Zedekiah (Heb. *Šidkiyahu*). "What Zedekiah's name, received at his accession, set forth as an ideal, would be a realized fact in the time of the Messianic King" (Peake). Contrast the Messianic picture in Ps. ii. (specially *v.* 9) with that (so much more consonant with Jeremiah's character) given here of a wise and just ruler over a nation united and at peace. We have a prophecy less plainly Messianic in xxx. 9, where see note.

5. *the days come*] The phrase (first occurring in Am. iv. 2), according to Jeremiah's employment of it (cp. *v.* 7, xxx. 3, xxxi. 27, 31, 38, xxxiii. 14), implies a special call to note the announcement thus introduced. In spite of the troubles which are now gathering round them there are none the less surely days of deliverance coming.

Branch] mg. Or, *Shoot* Or, *Bud*. While the word designating the Messiah in Is. xi. 1 is rightly translated Branch, the Heb. substantive here (*Šemach*) can only mean **shoot**, that which springs immediately out of the ground. In Is. iv. 2 the word is used in a more general sense, not as here of the individual Messianic Ruler, but of the produce of the

and ¹deal wisely, and shall execute judgement and justice in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, ²The LORD is our righteousness. ³Therefore, behold, the 7 days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, As the LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As the LORD liveth, which brought 8 up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

Concerning the prophets. Mine heart within me is 9

¹ Or, *prosper*

² Or, *The LORD our righteousness*

³ See ch. xvi. 14, 15.

soil in the blissful age of the Messiah. See further in Dr. p. 364 and on Is. iv. 2 (Skinner) in C.B.

deal wisely] For mg. *prosper* see on xx. 11.

execute judgement and justice] Cp. the same expression as used of David, the ancestor of the Messiah, in 2 Sam. viii. 15.

6. *Israel shall dwell safely*] Cp. Deut. xxxiii. 28. The Northern Tribes as well as Judah shall be restored, and form one kingdom.

he shall be called] The Messiah's work shall be indicated by the name that He is to bear.

The LORD is our righteousness] as indicating the ideal righteousness which is then to characterize the nation. Cp. Is. i. 26, lx. 21, lxi. 3. Of that righteousness Jehovah is to be the source. Cp. Ezek. xlviii. 35 "The LORD is there," mg. *Jehovah-shammah*. Cp. also xxxiii. 16, where the same name is given to Jerusalem. The A.V. ("*The LORD our righteousness*") survives in R.V. mg. but, as we see must be the case from the passage last referred to, the prophet is not identifying the Messiah with Jehovah.

7, 8. See on xvi. 14, 15. The LXX's omission of the *vv.* here, and insertion of them in a wholly incongruous context after v. 40, fall in with the supposition that, even if of Jeremiah's authorship, they do not rightly belong to this place. See further on xxxiii. 14—26.

7. *they shall no more say*] The exodus from Egypt, always hitherto quoted as the crowning manifestation of Jehovah's favour, would be eclipsed by a yet more glorious deliverance.

XXIII. 9—40. CONDEMNATION OF THE PROPHETS.

Following on the prophecies relating to successive kings of Judah, we have a section dealing with the iniquities of a class who also grievously misled the nation. The passage doubtless contains much that is

broken, all my bones shake ; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome ; because of the

genuine, but, from the diffuseness of style, especially in the latter part, it may be safely inferred that additional matter has been inserted. Commentators, however, are by no means agreed as to the amount of the latter. Du. omits all after *v.* 15, Co. nearly all after *v.* 24, Gi. *vv.* 30—40, while the last-named also rejects *vv.* 18—21. *Vv.* 9—17 and again 23—29 are in *Qinah* rhythm. Elsewhere metre is for the most part irregular or absent. The collection of utterances, so far as genuine, may have probably belonged to the last part of Zedekiah's reign.

The section may be thus subdivided. (i) *vv.* 9—15. Jeremiah is undone and nerveless because of the LORD's message to a land whose profligacy has brought on it a curse. The Temple itself is polluted by the iniquities of prophets and priests. They shall be as men driven in the dark along slippery ways till they fall. The prophets of Samaria led the people astray by alleged prophecies of their false deity, while the prophets of Jerusalem shock Jehovah still more by immorality, lying, and the encouragement of others in permanent evil-doing. They have reached the infamy of the cities of the plain. They have infected all the land ; therefore shall wormwood and gall be their food. (ii) *vv.* 16—18. It is from the prophets' own imaginations and not from Jehovah that their pleasing promises of immunity from evil come. Who is there who has visited His heavenly abode, there to learn His purposes ? (iii) *vv.* 19, 20. Jehovah's wrath shall break, like a storm, on the head of the wicked, and shall not be recalled till His purpose is fully achieved. (iv) *vv.* 21—24. Those prophets were not commissioned nor inspired by the LORD ; else they would have delivered His rebuke of the people's sins. He is omnipresent. They cannot escape His observation. (v) *vv.* 25—29. How long shall they adduce dreams, dreams forsooth, in support of their lying predictions, making the real character of Jehovah to be forgotten by the people, even as their fathers thought of Him as though He were no better than one of the Baals ? Let the dream be told, and let Jehovah's message be told as well ; but let the utterances which embody the two be sharply distinguished, as stubble from wheat. Jehovah's word is as fire, and as a hammer which breaketh the rocks. (vi) *vv.* 30—32. He is against the prophets who steal their announcements from the true prophets, and with ready tongue claim that they are from Him, who lead His people astray with delusive dreams and claims to Divine authority. They have not His commission, and so are without value. (vii) *vv.* 33—40. When asked, What is the LORD's burden, Jeremiah will answer, It is ye, and He will rid Himself of you as such. All who use the word "burden" shall be punished. The message shall be expressed in the simplest language, and your use of the word "burden" shall recoil upon yourselves. If ye nevertheless persist in its use, ye shall be banished for ever in disgrace from this ancestral city and from Jehovah's presence.

LORD, and because of his holy words. For the land is full 10
 of adulterers; for because of ¹swearing the land mourneth;
 the pastures of the wilderness are dried up; and their course
 is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and 11
 priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their
 wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be 12
 unto them as slippery places in the darkness: they shall be
 driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them,
²even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. And I 13
 have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied
 by Baal, and caused my people Israel to err. In the prophets 14
 of Jerusalem also I have seen an horrible thing; they commit
 adultery, and walk in lies, and they strengthen the hands of
 evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they

¹ Or, *the curse*

² Or, *in the year*

9. *his holy words*] the words which He in the holiness of His nature had put forth concerning the wicked doings of the false prophets.

10. Of the two clauses containing the words "the land," the first is probably a corruption of the second, as accidentally repeated by a copyist, or as a gloss on a blurred text, suggested perhaps by v. 14. It is not found in LXX, while Gi. would further omit "the pastures... dried up."

adulterers] either literally, or in the secondary sense of idolatry. Cp. iii. 8 f.

swearing] better, with mg. *the curse*, viz. the drought described in the next clause, if this last be not (so Gi.) an insertion, suggested perhaps by xii. 4. The LXX, however, without any change in the Heb. consonants, vocalised the word as *these things*.

course] lit. *running*.

11. *in my house have I found their wickedness*] Cp. vi. 13, and see 2 Kgs xxi. 5, xxiii. 12.

12. The figure is of men forced onwards by a pursuing foe, while they can neither see their way nor keep their footing. Cp. Ps. xxxv. 6.

driven on] lit. *thrust*. Cp. for the expression Prov. xiv. 32.

13. *folly*] lit. that which is tasteless, insipid (cp. cognate substantive in Job vi. 6 rendered "that which hath no savour"), hence moral unsavouriness, unseemliness.

prophets of Samaria] They were simply idolaters, who made no secret of their belief or practice. The prophets of Jerusalem on the other hand were thoroughly immoral besides.

Baal] See on ii. 8.

are all of them become unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

- 15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets: Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of ¹gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land.
- 16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they teach you vanity: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out
- 17 of the mouth of the LORD. They say continually unto them ²that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and unto every one that walketh in the stubbornness of his
- 18 own heart they say, No evil shall come upon you. For who

¹ See ch. viii. 14.

² According to the Sept., *that despise the word of the Lord, Ye &c.*

14. *all of them*] the prophets and their hearers alike. *thereof*] of Jerusalem.

15. *Behold, I will....*] identical with words in ix. 15, where see notes. Here it may be originally a marginal note by a copyist, reminiscent of that passage.

wormwood] Cp. Deut. xxix. 18; Prov. v. 4; Lam. iii. 15.

16—18. See introd. summary to section.

16. *teach you vanity*] deceive you with vain hopes, speak peace to those who are going on still in wicked courses. Cp. next v. This is a test whereby the false may be distinguished from the true prophet. *of their own heart*] imagined by themselves.

17. *that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye*] The mg. is supported by Syr., and is to be preferred, involving only a change of vowels. The MT. for "hath said" is an expression which does not elsewhere introduce the words of the LORD.

stubbornness] See iii. 17.

No evil shall come upon you] Cp. iv. 10, vi. 14, xiv. 13.

18. *who hath stood, etc.*] not meaning that Jeremiah himself had not been admitted to the council of Jehovah, but, as the context sufficiently shews, that this had been denied to the false prophets. Cp. v. 16. Duhm, making the whole passage (see above) to be a 2nd cent. B.C. insertion, holds the writer to be a sober-minded person of that date rebuking those who describe in their writings apocalyptic visions, as beheld by them, "giving themselves out to be as Enoch" of old. But even if that date could be upheld, no writer would then have used words condemning the accepted and the false prophets alike.

hath stood in the council of the LORD, that he should perceive and hear his word? who hath marked ¹my word, and heard it? Behold, the tempest of the LORD, *even his* fury, is gone ¹⁹ forth, yea, a whirling tempest: it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the LORD shall not return, ²⁰ until he have ²executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall ³understand it perfectly. I sent not these prophets, yet they ran: I ²¹ spake not unto them, yet they prophesied. But if they had ²² stood in my council, then had they caused my people to hear my words, and had turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. Am I a God at hand, saith ²³ the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself ²⁴

¹ Another reading is, *his*. ² Or, *done* it ³ Or, *consider*

council] a conclave or gathering of His familiar friends. To this, Jeremiah says, true prophets have access. See on Am. iii. 7 (Driver) in C.B.

my word] less well, *his word*, as suggested in mg.

19, 20. See introd. summary to section. These *vv.* agree substantially with xxx. 23 f., and are probably introduced here from that passage. They have no apparent connexion with the preceding or following *vv.*, and may have been inserted here as a declaration of Jehovah's real purpose as opposed to the predictions of the false prophets.

20. *the latter days*] a prophetic phrase denoting the final period of the history so far as the speaker's perspective reaches; e.g. Israel's return to God after adversity (so the parallel passage xxx. 24; cp. Deut. iv. 30). We find the expression again, xlviii. 47, xlix. 39.

understand] mg. (less well) *consider*.

21—24. See introd. summary to section. Here we again take up the thought of *v.* 18.

22. *my council*] See *v.* 18.

23, 24. The connexion of thought has been variously explained. (i) The LXX make *v.* 23 an affirmation, not a question. God, as universally present, can never be at a distance, and this agrees with *v.* 24. Afterwards, the *v.* was made interrogative to meet the difficulty connected with the later Jewish conception, viz. that God dwelt wholly apart from men. So Gi. The connexion, however, is still somewhat obscure. (ii) Jehovah is not accessible to the first person who rashly, like you, claims intimacy, but only to one known and consecrated from his birth, "a chosen vessel" (Acts ix. 15). But if one *is* thus chosen, he must accept the office. He cannot hide himself. So Co. The

in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD.
 25 Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. I have
 heard what the prophets have said, that prophesy lies in my
 26 name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long
 shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies;
 27 even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? which
 think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams
 which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers
 28 forgot my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream,
 let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him
 speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat?
 29 saith the LORD. Is not my word like as fire? saith the
 LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?
 30 Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the

contrast thus made between *vv.* 23 and 24 is the weak point here.
 (iii) These false prophets cannot hide themselves. God is omnipresent
 and sees through their deceptive claims. We can hardly say more than
 that this is perhaps the least unsatisfying of the interpretations.

25—29. See introd. summary to section.

25. *I have dreamed, I have dreamed*] These were the words with
 which they caught the ear of the crowd, and so gained a sure hearing for
 their pretended revelations. But another kind of test was needed (see
 Introd. pp. xxxii. f.), and this the false prophets failed to supply.

26. The opening words are evidently corrupt. Co. accepts Du.'s
 suggestion to substitute (by a not violent change in MT.) a *third*
 "I have dreamed" (cp. vii. 4, xxii. 29) for "How long," and for "shall
 this be...prophets" to read (by a different division of words) "Will the
 heart of the prophets turn."

27. *to forget my name*] not literally, but to forget the essential
 character of Him who bears the name. So their fathers confused Baal
 with Jehovah. See on ii. 23. The nature of the sin was the same.

every man to his neighbour] *one to another*, each prophet to those who
 will listen.

28. Mere dreams and the truth of God are to be kept asunder.

What is the straw to the wheat?] God's word contains nourishment
 and life. Other words are but as straw.

29. This *v.* supplies a further test of a genuine prophetic utterance,
viz. penetration and power.

like as fire] Cp. v. 14 and note there. The conception is that "of
 the prophetic word as endowed with God's living energy and securing
 its own fulfilment" (Peake).

30—32. See introd. summary to section.

LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that ³¹use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against ³²them that prophesy lying dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither shall they profit this people at all, saith the LORD. And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, ³³shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the LORD? then shalt thou ²say unto them, ³What burden! I will cast you off, saith the LORD. And as for the prophet, and the priest, ³⁴and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house. Thus shall ye say ³⁵every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother,

¹ Heb. *take*.² Or, *tell them what the burden is*³ The Sept. and Vulgate have, *Ye are the burden*.

30. *steal my words*] They have themselves no revelation to impart, and therefore proclaim as their own that which has been said by the really inspired.

31. *use*] The tongue is all of which they can avail themselves. There is no first-hand knowledge behind it.

He saith] This phrase, borrowed from the true prophets, will, they expect, help their sayings to pass as genuine.

By the side of the Party of the Nobles "perhaps opposed to them, perhaps allied with them, in that strange combination which often brings together, for purposes of political or religious animosity, parties themselves most alien to each other, was the great body of the Sacerdotal, and even of the Prophetic order. There were those who directly lent themselves to magical rites...who recited the old prophetic phrases, often careless of what they meant." Stanley's *J. Ch.* II. 438.

32. *vain boasting*] The Hebrew root, which is rather rare, denotes in the cognate languages impudent boldness.

33—40. See introd. summary to section. The original word means either a burden or a prophetic utterance. It would appear that those hostile to Jeremiah had taken to apply the word derisively to the prophet's utterances as being indeed *burdensome*. "What new prophecy hast thou for us to hear? At any rate we will warrant it to be a wearying one." Hence the word is to be used no longer, but expressions not open to such misuse are to take its place.

33. *say unto them, What burden!*] mg. (less well) *tell them what the burden is*, but mg. also suggests that we read, with LXX and Vulg., *Ye are the burden*. The change requires only a different division of the consonants in MT. and has general support.

What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD
 36 spoken? And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no
 more: for every man's own word ¹shall be his burden; for
 ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD
 37 of hosts our God. Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What
 hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD
 38 spoken? But if ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore
 thus saith the LORD: Because ye say this word, The burden
 of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not
 39 say, The burden of the LORD; therefore, behold, I will
²utterly forget you, and I will cast you off, and the city that
 I gave unto you and to your fathers, away from my presence:
 40 and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a
 perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

¹ Or, *is his burden, and ye pervert &c.*

² Or, according to some ancient authorities, *lift you up*

36. *every man's own word shall be his burden*] mg. *is his burden, and ye pervert, etc.* Either (a) he who has jokingly enquired after the "burden of the LORD" shall find that those lightly spoken words of his are in very deed the heaviest load to bear, or (b) (rendering for "shall be" *is*) no alleged prophetic utterance has in fact any higher authority than the speaker himself.

ye have perverted, etc.] The LXX omit this clause; also the greater part of v. 37 (which is v. 35 repeated). The accumulation of epithets in v. 36 renders the clause suspicious.

38. *But if ye say...of the LORD*] LXX omit.

39. *utterly forget you*] The alternative in mg. *lift you up*, as rendering the Hebrew verb from which "burden" is derived, is clearly right, that substantive being the key-word of the passage, and the two verbs being very similar. So LXX, Syr., Vulg. The difficulty which we feel now in understanding why the punishment for the use of the word was to be so terrible doubtless did not exist when the passage was composed.

CH. XXIV. 1—10. THE TWO BASKETS OF FIGS.

The meaning of the vision is given with sufficient clearness in the subsequent verses. Those who had not been carried away in Jehoia-chin's captivity (B.C. 597) contrasted themselves favourably with those who had been thus removed. To them the LORD here says that the real contrast is exactly the reverse. Of the good and evil figs, the latter represent such as have failed to draw any improvement from the fate which has overtaken their brethren, while those who have been carried

The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs ²⁴ set before the temple of the LORD; after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. One basket had very good figs, like the ² figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. Then said ³ the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. And the word of the ⁴ LORD came unto me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God ⁵ of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I regard the captives

off to Babylon shall yet be the subjects of God's love and grace. Both the baskets contained fruit that had been gathered, and whose ripening time was therefore over, but here their likeness ceased. So both classes of the people had had their period of probation, but with results that on the whole differed essentially.

The section may be subdivided as follows.

(i) *vv. 1—3.* After Jehoiachin and the other captives had been taken to Babylon, Jehovah shews Jeremiah two baskets of figs. He bids him describe them and he does so. (ii) *vv. 4—10.* The good figs are the exiles, whom He will restore to their land and to prosperity, because of their loyalty to Him. The evil are Zedekiah and the rest that remain in Palestine, as well as those who have gone to Egypt. This fortune shall be their portion. They shall be scattered throughout the world, and be scorned of all nations, and perish through war, famine, and plague from the land Jehovah gave their fathers.

1. For the symbol, as probably indicating not a mental picture but actual baskets to which Jeremiah's attention was directed, cp. note on i. 11 f. See also the kindred symbol in Am. viii. 1.

Nebuchadrezzar] See on xxi. 2.

Jeconiah] See on xxii. 24.

smiths] The exact meaning of the Hebrew is unknown.

2. *the figs that are first ripe*] The proper time for gathering figs in Palestine is in August. Certain kinds of trees, however, bear twice in the year, in which case the first crop, ripening in June, are esteemed a special delicacy. See Is. xxviii. 4; Hos. ix. 10; Mic. vii. 1; Nah. iii. 12.

"The bad figs may have been such either from having decayed and thus been reduced to a rotten condition, or as being the fruit of the sycamore, which contains a bitter juice." Tristram, *op. cit.* p. 399.

4—10. See introd. summary to section.

5. *so will I regard...for good*] as one looks with pleasure on good

of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land
 6 of the Chaldeans, for good. For I will set mine eyes upon
 them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and
 I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant
 7 them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart
 to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my
 people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto
 8 me with their whole heart. And as the bad figs, which cannot
 be eaten, they are so bad; surely thus saith the LORD, So
 will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes,
 and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and
 9 them that dwell in the land of Egypt: I will even give them
 up to be ¹tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the
 earth for evil; to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and
 10 a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will
 send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them,
 till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto
 them and to their fathers.

¹ Or, *a terror unto*

fruit. Cp. Ezek. xi. 17 ff., xx. 37 f. Ezekiel on the other hand condemns (as does Jeremiah) those who remained in Jerusalem (Ezek. xii., xvii. 1—21, xxi. 25—27, xxii.).

6. *I will plant them*] Cp. xxxi. 27 f., xxxii. 41.

7. *an heart to know me*] They shall be restored in a spiritual sense also, purified in heart by their adversity.

8. *them that dwell in the land of Egypt*] Whether those who accompanied Jehoahaz (2 Kings xxiii. 34), or others who during the subsequent reigns also took refuge there, as being a kingdom opposed to the Babylonian power. The Assuan papyri (see Intr. p. xix., note) shew that in B.C. 525 there was a colony which had existed there for a considerable time previously.

9. *tossed to and fro*] See on xv. 4. The *v.* is the substance of Deut. xxviii. 25, 37.

10. The fresh captivity shall be preceded by the same horrors as before (see on xv. 2). Those who are represented by the evil figs were thus, still dwelling in the land, to be wasted by famine, pestilence, and sword, while the nation should thenceforward have representatives living in disgrace and exile throughout "the kingdoms."

CH. XXV. 1—38. PREDICTION OF THE SUPREMACY OF BABYLON.

The reply of the prophet to Zedekiah's message, comprised in the last four chapters, has come to an end. Accordingly we here return to

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people 25
of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah,

a prophecy delivered during the time of Jehoiakim. It extends throughout the ch., with the exception of vv. 12—14, where see notes. The ch. points out (i) the cause of the coming overthrow of Judah (vv. 1—7), (ii) Babylon's victory and subsequent ruin in requital for their deeds (8—14), (iii) the wine-cup of God's fury to be drunk by all nations from Egypt to the Eastern kingdoms Elam, Media, and Babylon (15—29), (iv) the judgement to come upon all peoples of the earth (30—38).

Important and difficult questions arise in connexion with this chapter. (i) It has come down to us in the MT. in what is apparently by no means its original form. In the Hebrew vv. 1—13 predict judgement as about to fall not only upon Judah and Jerusalem, but (vv. 9—11) upon the "nations round about," all of whom shall be laid waste and serve Babylon for seventy years, while at the end of that period Jehovah will bring on Babylon itself v. 13 "that land") the judgement foretold *in extenso* in chs. l., li. Schwally (*The words of the Book of Jeremiah against the Heathen*, ZATW, 1888, pp. 177 ff., quoted by Co.) rejects the whole of these vv. as not containing "the characteristic impress" of Jeremiah's theology, viz. the thought of the possibility of the people's conversion. Co. replies, however, that at such a crisis as had now arrived, the known world in general, and not only Judah, was ripe for judgement, and that the prophet must have realised that Nebuchadrezzar would take ruthless advantage of his great victory. Gi. thinks the main part of the passage to be genuine and introduced by Baruch from a clear recollection of his master's utterances. Du. considers a large part of vv. 1—14 to be genuine, and to have formed originally the close of the first edition of the Roll as dictated to Baruch, and repeated to him for inclusion in the second edition together with the subsequent additions (xxxvi. 32), such as we have here in chs. xxvi. ff. Du. and Co. hold that the original form of the passage dealt only with the coming fate of the Jewish nation, and scarcely at all with that of others, and that the additions were made in order suitably to preface the insertion in the immediate context of the prophecies against foreign nations, now indeed found in chs. xlvi.—li., but in LXX (see further below) following upon v. 13. These additions, Co. thinks, had only reached their first stage at the time when the LXX Version was made, while they now culminate in vv. 12—14 (see on those vv.).

1. *in the fourth year*] In the earlier part of the Book we have not any prophecy so closely dated as the present. Cp. ch. iii. 6 and xxvi. 1 ("In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim"). The addition of the year of Nebuchadrezzar marks more forcibly the fact that it was a turning-point in history (see Introduction, p. xvi.). The prophecy was delivered about 604 B.C., after the arrival of the news of the victory of Nebuchadrezzar at Carchemish. The main objects of the prophet were to point out the sins of the past, and to give advice for the future. That advice was to accept the result of the battle of Carchemish, and to yield

king of Judah; the same was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar
 2 king of Babylon; the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto
 all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
 3 saying: From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon,
 king of Judah, even unto this day, these three and twenty
 years, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have
 spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; but ye have
 4 not hearkened. And the LORD hath sent unto you all his
 servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but
 5 ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear; saying,
 Return ye now every one from his evil way, and from the evil
 of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath
 given unto you and to your fathers, from of old and even for
 6 evermore: and go not after other gods to serve them, and
 to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the work
 7 of your hands; and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not
 hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might provoke
 me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt.

to Babylon as the power which God had appointed to bear rule over
 Palestine and the other kingdoms for the next seventy years.

the same was...Babylon] The LXX omit: probably a gloss.

2. *spake unto all the people*] The events of ch. xxxvi. (see v. 26 there)
 had not yet occurred. Jeremiah was still at liberty.

3. *these three and twenty years*] Josiah reigned thirty-one years, and
 it was in the thirteenth year of that king (ch. i. 2) that Jeremiah was
 called. He therefore prophesied for eighteen or nineteen years in that
 reign. To this we are to add the reign of Jehoahaz (three months), and
 more than three years of Jehoiakim.

but ye have not hearkened] Omit with LXX. See next note.

4. The editor or copyist failed to perceive that it is the prophet, not
 Jehovah, who is speaking in v. 3. Moreover, the grammar in the
 Hebrew is suspicious, and this v. is an insertion suggested by such
 passages as vii. 25, xi. 7. By omitting it, and (with LXX) all after
 "unto me" in v. 7, we get a smooth and consistent text, the words
 being those of Jeremiah, not Jehovah, throughout.

6. *provoke me not*] Read **provoke not Jehovah**, a correction easily
 made in the Hebrew.

7. *unto me*] i.e. Jeremiah.

saith the LORD] The words were inserted through the same error
 which led to the insertion of v. 4.

that ye might...own hurt] The gloss was suggested by the similar
 language of v. 6.

work of your hands] idols. Cp. x. 3, 9, xxxii. 30; Deut. xxxi. 29.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts: Because ye have 8
not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the 9
families of the north, saith the LORD, and *I will send* unto
Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will
bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants
thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I
will ¹utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment,
and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will ¹⁰
²take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness,
the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the
sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And ¹¹
this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment;
and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy

¹ Heb. *devote*.² Heb. *cause to perish from them*.

8—14. Babylon's victory and subsequent ruin.

8, 9. *saith the LORD...my servant*] LXX omit, doubtless rightly, as a gloss which needlessly introduces harshness into the construction of the MT. It is remarkable, however, that neither do they recognise this title for Nebuchadrezzar elsewhere (xxvii. 6 [xxxiv. 5], xliii. [l.] 10), probably as being considered by them to be inapplicable to an idolater. For its application to him cp. Ezek. xxix. 19 f.

9. *the families of the north*] See ch. i. 14 f.

families] For the wide use of this word see on iii. 14, and cp. viii. 3.

utterly destroy] lit. as mg. *devote*, i.e. place them under a ban. LXX, reading otherwise two Hebrew letters often written rather similarly, *lay waste*. Cp. Deut. xx. 17.

an astonishment] *a destruction*. See on v. 30.

desolations] LXX (by a variation of one letter) *reproach*.

10. *take from them*] lit. as mg. *cause to perish from them*.

the voice of mirth, etc.] Cp. vii. 34. Here mention of the millstones and of the candle (lamp) is added, typical of domestic labour and social cheer. See the same description somewhat amplified in Rev. xviii. 22 f.

millstones] See Dr.'s note for description of the hand-mill in daily use in an Eastern village.

11. *and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon*] LXX have, "and they shall be servants among the heathen," thus omitting "these," and "the king of Babylon," and probably indicating the original form of the Hebrew, which, however, they render inaccurately, as the construction of the verb here gives the sense not *serve*, but *make to serve*. The meaning is that "the families of the north" shall bring the Jews and the other nations into bondage.

seventy years] the approximate length of the Jewish captivity in

- 12 years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it ¹desolate for ever.
- 13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book,
- 14 which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For

¹ Heb. *everlasting desolations*.

Babylon as is clearly shewn by xxix. 10. It will have to be reckoned, not from the deportation of Jehoiachin's time (2 Kings xxiv. 14—16), but from (604 B.C.) the 4th year of Jehoiakim to (537 B.C.) the return. It is quite sufficient to make an approximation to the number seventy. The Jewish love for round numbers and especially for one so significant in symbolism, as having for its elements seven and ten, would cause the number seventy to their ears when used in such a connexion to stand for any number not differing by much from that amount.

12—14. See end of introductory note to this section. Of these vv., 12 and 14, as well as the latter part of 13, cannot be a genuine part of Jeremiah's prophecies, to be dated, like the earlier part of the passage, in "the 4th year of Jehoiakim," but are subsequent insertions when the Book was virtually completed as at present. V. 12 seems constructed out of xxix. 10 (the assignment of the definite "seventy years" is shewn to be authentic there by the whole tenor of that ch.), where the Heb. "everlasting desolations" (as mg. here) is identical with that in this v. together with li. 26, 62. Moreover, (i) all three vv. form a break in the subject-matter, while vv. 15 f. give the reason for the punishment not of Babylon (vv. 12—14) but of Judah and the other nations (v. 11), and (ii) v. 13 implies that the prophecies against foreign nations (chs. xlv. — li.) and in particular against Babylon (chs. l., li.) were already included in the Book, whereas this last prophecy, if by Jeremiah at all, which may well be doubted (see introd. note there), was not placed in the collection till long after this date (see also on li. 59—64 for date of that portion). V. 14 (absent from LXX) appears to be made up from xxvii. 7 and l. 29, li. 24. Thus from the word "astonishment" in v. 11 we should proceed at once (v. 13) "and I will bring...this book," continuing direct with v. 15 "For, etc."

13. *even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations*] At this point there presents itself one of the most marked discrepancies between the Septuagint Version of Jeremiah and the Hebrew. (See Introd. iv. §§ 10 ff.) The Greek Version as it stands now ends the sentence with "in this book," and reads as a new sentence, and title of the section on the nations, "What Jeremiah prophesied against the nations," although it is probable that originally these words were, as in E.VV., merely descriptive of "even all...book."

many nations and great kings ¹shall serve themselves of them, even of them : and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands.

For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto me : 15

¹ Or, *have served themselves* or, *made bondmen*

Upon this follows, with the heading "The things of (concerning) Elam," what with us appears as ch. xlix. 35—39, and then, although in a different order of grouping, the other prophecies against foreign nations including Babylon, which in the Hebrew text (and E.VV.) come at the end of the whole Book (chs. xlii.—li.). Which arrangement (if either, which Co. doubts) is the original one? Against the LXX's order it is urged that by the Greek arrangement the passing of sentence upon the nations (vv. 15—38 [xxxii. 1—24]) is made to follow, whereas it should naturally precede, the announcement of punishments as set forth in detail in the prophecies themselves. In favour of the order of the LXX as the original one are the following considerations : (a) It is unlikely that the words rendered "which Jeremiah hath prophesied, etc." (v. 13) should be from the prophet himself, while the clause would form a natural heading to the collection of prophecies against foreign nations, occurring thus *in the course* of the Book (as in Ezekiel chs. xxv.—xxxii.). When Hebrew editors of the text removed them to the end, the clause in question was left behind (cp. the converse proceeding pointed out in note on li. 64) and considered to be the conclusion of the preceding sentence ; (b) we should *a priori* expect these prophecies to appear here in company with the kindred matter (vv. 15—38). There is however a third hypothesis, which deserves serious consideration, viz. that in both Hebrew and LXX texts these prophecies stood at the end of ch. xxv., and were removed to the respective positions which they now occupy in the two texts, because (a) the general overthrow anticipated at the time of the battle of Carchemish, and set forth in the vision of the wine-cup, did not in fact occur, and (b) the modifications of an apocalyptic character, apparently introduced into the latter part of this ch. in order to apply its threatening to a last judgement of the world, rendered it no longer a suitable introduction to them. This view is strongly supported by Peake who argues that the closing words of v. 13 should be taken as indicating a stage at which the Hebrew, and not only the LXX, placed these prophecies at this point.

14. *shall serve themselves of them, even of them*] lit. *shall work by* (means of) *them*, i.e. shall use them as slaves. As the Chaldaeans have done to the people of God, so shall He requite them.

15—29. The wine-cup of the LORD's fury to be drunk by all the nations.

For confusion and dismay, expressed under the figure of intoxication, see below. Overthrow at the hands of the Chaldaeans is to be the fate of the nations.

The genuineness of the passage as a whole has been challenged by

Take the cup of the wine of this fury at my hand, and cause
 16 all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they
 shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, because of the
 17 sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup
 at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto
 18 whom the LORD had sent me: *to wit*, Jerusalem, and the
 cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof,
 to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and
 19 a curse; as it is this day; Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his

Schwally and Du., but on insufficient grounds, although it has probably received a certain editorial expansion. Co. considers the whole ch. to have a genuine Jeremianic *basis*, and Gi. agrees as to vv. 15—19, but brackets vv. 20—31 as later insertions, adducing among other reasons the placing of Judah and her neighbours on a level of comparison, contrary to the spirit of the genuine portions of Jeremiah, and the vagueness of the expressions, “all the kings of Tyre,” “of Zidon,” etc. (v. 22).

the cup of the wine of this fury] The likening of disaster to a bitter and intoxicating draught is frequent in the Bible. See chs. xiii. 12 f., xlix. 12, li. 7; Job xxi. 20; Ps. lx. 3, lxxv. 8; Is. li. 17, 22; Ezek. xxiii. 31; Hab. ii. 15; Rev. xiv. 8, xvii. 4, xviii. 3.

17. *Then took I the cup*] not in any literal sense, but in vision; yet “not a mere allegory, but a psychic experience, in which Jeremiah really seems to himself to be forcing the goblet on the nations which he enumerates.” Pe.

18. The list which follows is one which has evidently been expanded. The LXX omit “all the kings of the land of Uz” (v. 20), “all the kings of Arabia” [or (see note there) “all the kings of the mingled people”] (v. 24), and “all the kings of Zimri” (v. 25). Gi. and Co. accordingly consider that this phrase marks additions throughout. It will also be observed that in v. 20 Philistia is virtually enumerated (“Ashkelon, etc.”) twice. In v. 18 Co. would omit all after “Judah,” and put Pharaoh at the head of the list to be displaced afterwards by a scribe jealous for the precedence of his country even in a list of this character!

We may perceive a certain system (south to north) in the enumeration. After Jerusalem and Judah the prophet takes in order the furthest south (Egypt), south-east (Uz), south-west (Philistines), east (Edom, etc.), west (Tyre, etc.), east and northwards (Dedan, etc. to the Medes), and finally the north far and near (v. 26).

kings] For the suspicious character of the use of the pl. see end of introd. note on xix. 3—9.

and a curse] not in LXX, and probably introduced here from xxiv. 9.

as it is this day] absent from LXX, and evidently added after B.C. 586 in the time of the exile.

19. *Pharaoh*] a name belonging not to an individual but (cp. *Kaiser*

servants, and his princes, and all his people; and all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the ¹isle which is beyond the sea; Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all that have the corners of their hair polled; and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that

¹ Or, *coastland*

and *Czar*) to the monarch as such. The word has been somewhat altered in shape by its transmission to us through Hebrew. It is the hieroglyph *Per-âa*, meaning *great house* (cp. *Sublime Porte*), and gradually became the title of the ruler himself.

20. *and all the mingled people*] here denoting foreigners living in Egypt. This phrase (and so in v. 24) means those who sojourned in a country for commercial or other purposes without losing their own nationality. Cp. l. 37 (referring to foreigners living in Babylon); Ex. xii. 38; 1 Kgs x. 15; Ezek. xxx. 5; Neh. xiii. 3.

and all the kings of the land of Uz] very possibly a gloss (omitted by LXX). Uz was an Aramaean tribe, apparently E. or N.E. of Edom. Cp. Lam. iv. 21; Job i. 1. Co. suggests that it may have been familiarity with the latter passage that induced a copyist to insert the clause here, as naming a place better known than some of the others. For other mentions of Uz see Gen. x. 23, xxii. 21, xxxvi. 28.

the remnant of Ashdod] It was captured after twenty-nine years' siege by the Egyptian king Psammetichus (who reigned B.C. 666—610). See Rawlinson, *Herod.* II. 157. The expression "remnant" therefore has its significance.

22. *Zidon*] the ordinary form of the name in the O.T. Cp. xxvii. 3, xvii. 4. Sidon, as the Greek form, is that which occurs in the N.T.

isle] mg. *coastland*, lit. where a mariner betakes himself for refuge or rest; hence used of the colonies planted by Phoenicians on the shores of the Mediterranean.

23. *Dedan*] a tribe descended from Abraham by his wife Keturah (Gen. x. 7) and dwelling S.E. of Edom. Their caravans maintained a trade between Tyre and Arabia (Ezek. xxvii. 15, 20, xxxviii. 13).

Tema] the modern *Teimā*, about 250 miles S.E. of Edom. They were descendants of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 15).

Buz] See Gen. xxii. 21. Elihu is called a Buzite (Job xxxii. 2).

all that have the corners of their hair polled] See on ix. 26.

24. *and all the kings of Arabia*] LXX omit.

Arabia] lit. dwellers in the *steppes* (*ārābāh*), "a tribe (or group of tribes) somewhere in N. Arabia; cf. Is. xxi. 13...after Old Testament

25 dwell in the wilderness; and all the kings of Zimri, and all
 26 the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; and all
 the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and
 all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of
 the earth: and the king of ¹Sheshach shall drink after them.
 27 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts,

¹ According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Babel*. See ch. li. 41.

times it was gradually extended so as to denote the whole of what we now know as 'Arabia.' But in the Old Testament the rend. 'Arabia' suggests far more than what is really meant." Dr.

the mingled people] See note on v. 20, but in the unvocalised Hebrew the clause is identical with the preceding. Thus one of them only is genuine.

25. *and all the kings of Zimri*] LXX omit, and the name is found here only. Du. ingeniously conjectures that it may be a fictitious one intended by a late editor to hint covertly at the Romans, the Hebrew consonants of which have (combined) the same numerical value. This, however, would make the insertion a very late one. Cp. note on Sheshach below.

Elam] a province of the Assyrian Empire. See on xlix. 34.

26. *of the world*] rightly omitted by LXX. It is clear that vv. 25, 26 bear traces of modification in consonance with later Jewish views as to the end of the dispensation.

which are upon the face of the earth] This would not suggest to the Jewish ear, as it does to us, the thought of absolutely universal dominion on the part of Babylon. This we see from such passages as Dan. ii. 38, iv. 22, where the sense intended to be conveyed cannot be in accordance with the sense of the words taken literally.

Sheshach, etc.] This clause also is absent from LXX, and doubtless is a later insertion. *Sheshach* = *Babel* (Babylon) in accordance with a system of cypher writing. It took different forms, of which this (called *Atbash*) consists in substituting the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet for the first, the last but one for the second and so on. ShShCh will on this principle take the places of BBL. Cp. li. 41, where Sheshach and Babylon occur in parallel clauses. See also in li. 1, where the Hebrew (Le B Ka Ma Y) becomes, when thus transmuted, CaSDIM = Chaldaeans, the actual rendering of the Septuagint. They omit Sheshach in li. 41. The word to the Hebrew ear suggested *sinking, humiliation*, and thus alluded to Babylon's eventual *punishment*, which, however, is foreign to the thought of the passage.

shall drink after them] The turn of Babylon itself shall come to perish.

27—29. There is some reason to consider these vv. a later insertion. For (i) the nations (v. 17) had already been made to drink, (ii) Jehovah ("and thou shalt say") suddenly becomes the speaker, instead of, as

the God of Israel: Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup ²⁸ at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Ye shall surely drink. For, lo, I ²⁹ begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore prophesy ³⁰ thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar against his ¹fold; he shall give a shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to ³¹ the end of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword, saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth ³² from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And the slain of ³³

¹ Or, *pasture*

in the previous *vv.*, the prophet himself, (iii) the implication (*v.* 29) that the guilt of other nations is greater than that of Judah is inconsistent with such passages as *ii.* 10 f.

^{29.} *called by my name*] See on *vii.* 10.

^{30—38.} The judgement to come upon all the peoples of the earth. The description is characterized by Oriental hyperbole. A considerable amount is adapted from elsewhere, and the eschatological character of the whole tends to throw serious doubts upon the genuineness of the passage.

^{30.} *The LORD shall roar*] as a lion coming forth from his covert, and terrifying by his approach the shepherds and their flocks. There is no escape and the slain cover the earth. Cp. *Am.* i. 2.

fold] For *mg. pasture* cp. *x.* 25, *xxiii.* 3.

a shout] lit. *a vintage shout*, the cry with which the treaders of the grapes used to cheer their toil. So Jehovah will trample down the nations. Cp. *xlvi.* 33, where see note; *Is.* xvi. 10. Here, however, it is the battle shout. Cp. *li.* 14.

^{31.} *A noise*] lit. a crash, battle-din. So in *li.* 55; *Is.* xiii. 4, xvii. 12; *Hos.* x. 14; *Am.* ii. 2.

plead] See on *ii.* 9.

^{33.} *the slain of the LORD*] For the phrase cp. *Is.* lxvi. 16.

the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth : they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried ; they shall be dung upon the
 34 face of the ground. Howl, ye shepherds, and cry ; and wallow yourselves *in ashes*, ye principal of the flock : for the days of your slaughter are fully come, ¹and I will break you
 35 in pieces, and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And ²the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the
 36 flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and the howling of the principal of the flock ! for the LORD layeth
 37 waste their pasture. And the peaceable folds are brought
 38 to silence because of the fierce anger of the LORD. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion : for their land is become an

¹ Or, *and I will disperse you* Many ancient versions read, *and your dispersions*. ² Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escape from &c.*

they shall not...gathered] omitted by LXX and apparently inserted here by MT. from viii. 2.

34. *wallow yourselves in ashes*] rather, **sprinkle yourselves**. See on vi. 26. The words "in ashes" are added in E.VV. only because they occur in the Hebrew of the other passage.

principal of the flock] not equivalent to "shepherds," but rather, chief among the sheep, i.e. wealthy ones of the people, whose rank and riches avail nothing now.

and I will break you in pieces] mg. (less well) *and I will disperse you*. Aq. Symm. Theod. Vulg. read, *and your dispersions*. The Hebrew is difficult in point of grammar.

like a pleasant vessel] By altering one Hebrew consonant, we can render with LXX *like choice rams*. But the reading "rams" might easily arise through the influence of "principal of the flock" just before, and to this we may add that the figure of a *vessel* in such a connexion has been already used by Jeremiah (xxii. 28). Cp. also 2 Chr. xxxii. 27, xxxvi. 10; Hos. xiii. 15; Nah. ii. 9.

35. *And the shepherds, etc.*] For the idiom in mg. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escape from, etc.*, cp. Job xi. 20 mg. ; Ps. cxlii. 4 (Heb. 5); Am. ii. 14.

36. Cp. Zech. xi. 3.

37. Co. for metrical reasons transfers the last two clauses of v. 38 to end v. 35. He also omits the second part of v. 37, joining "and the peaceable...silence" to v. 36.

38. *He hath forsaken his covert*] a repetition of the figure with which the section opened. As the lion seeks other shelter, when that which he has dwelt in hitherto is destroyed, so Jehovah forsakes his land now

astonishment because of ¹the fierceness of the oppressing sword, and because of his fierce anger.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of 26 Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from the LORD,

¹ Or, according to some ancient authorities, *the oppressing sword* See ch. xlv. 16.

that it has become desolate. But perhaps we should omit "as," and read "the lion leaves his covert," i.e. the very jungle is cleared away in devastation. The future fate of Judah is spoken of as already accomplished.

the fierceness of the oppressing sword] Observe the italics in text. Owing to the word rendered "oppressing" being scarcely found elsewhere except as an adjective in the expression "oppressing sword" (xlv. 16 and l. 16), a reading which by a slight alteration of the Hebrew for "fierceness" (supported by LXX) we obtain here, we may safely adopt it, discarding "the fierceness of." The Vulg. renders the Hebrew word above referred to in its more ordinary sense of *a dove*, i.e. Nebuchadnezzar, in reference to the Jewish belief that his standards bore that device.

and because of his fierce anger] This clause is not found in LXX, but is wanted for parallelism, and so very possibly to be retained.

CH. XXVI. 1—24. SOLEMN WARNING ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE AND ITS RESULTS.

This ch. as a whole gives us a rapid sketch of the circumstances under which Jeremiah had uttered the prophecies that went before. The more definite he had become in his warnings, the more he excited the wrath of the false prophets and of those who sided with them; and now that he had explicitly announced (xxv. 11) a seventy years' captivity, their indignation boiled over, and they sought to compass his death. From the contents of this ch. then we can realise better under what conditions and with what courage the prophet continued his forecastings of definite calamity in the chapters which follow. "The beginning" will naturally denote some date earlier than the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when the crisis came about, and Jeremiah was no longer listened to nor tolerated (ch. xxxvi.).

The ch. may be summarized thus. (i) vv. 1—6. Jeremiah declares publicly that in the absence of amendment the Temple shall share the fate of Shiloh. (ii) vv. 7—15. He is in consequence attacked by priests and prophets, and speaks in his own defence. (iii) vv. 16—19. The princes and people rescue and defend him. Micah's case is adduced in his support. (iv) vv. 20—24. Jeremiah's danger is illustrated by the compiler by means of the story of Uriah.

2 saying, Thus saith the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; keep not back a
3 word. It may be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way; that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their
4 doings. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD: If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law,
5 which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I send unto you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened;
6 then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this
7 city a curse to all the nations of the earth. And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking

1—6. For a discussion as to the relation of these *vv.* to chs. vii.—x. see introductory note there.

Gi. points out that the use of the 3rd person with reference to Jeremiah as well as other features of the ch. indicate the probability that it is a compilation made by Baruch, upon which the following chs. also to xlv. evidently draw considerably. We may note that owing to Baruch's habit of dating the events which he mentions, a light is thrown upon them which is often lacking in regard to the prophet's discourses.

2. *the court of the LORD's house*] probably the outer court, as that in which the people would assemble; so ch. xix. 14.

the cities of] LXX omit; introduced perhaps to harmonize with xi. 6.

keep not back a word] The temptation in the way of suppression would be through natural shrinking from the danger involved. Cp. Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32.

3. *repent*] See on xviii. 8.

4. *my law*] See on viii. 8. Here the reference, as the following clause indicates, is to the doctrinal rather than the ritual teaching.

I have set before you] See on ix. 13.

5. *rising up early and sending*] See vii. 13.

6. *Shiloh*] See on vii. 12.

will make this city a curse to] will make all nations use it as an example when imprecating curses on their enemies. Cp. xxiv. 9 and contrast Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18.

7—16. See introd. summary to ch.

7. *prophets*] The LXX, in order to make the sense clearer, render the Hebrew here, as in *vv.* 8, 11, and 16, "false prophets."

these words in the house of the LORD. And it came to 8
pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that
the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the
people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people
laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast 9
thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This
house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate,
without inhabitant? And all the people were gathered
unto Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they 10
came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD;
and they sat in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's
house. Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the 11
princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of
death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have
heard with your ears. Then spake Jeremiah unto all the 12
princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to
prophesy against this house and against this city all the
words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your 13
ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD

8. *Thou shalt surely die*] That prophet who spoke without God's command was according to Deut. xviii. 20 to be put to death. The charge against Jeremiah then was of this nature, and the alleged proof, that it was impossible in the nature of things that such a calamity could be allowed to happen to the people of God.

10. *the princes of Judah...came up from the king's house*] The powers of these persons are not clear. Evidently, however, their employment about the court and the constantly increasing weakness of the monarchy would help them to the acquisition of such authority as we find them here exercising.

came up] See on xxii. 1.

the new gate] probably the same as the "upper gate" of ch. xx. 2, where see note.

of the LORD'S house] The MT. omits "house." Possibly we should reject both substantives. They are unnecessary after v. 9. LXX MSS., agreeing as to "house," are divided with regard to "the LORD."

11. *hath prophesied against this city*] Cp. Acts vi. 12 ff.

12. Jeremiah's defence is that the message is from God and therefore true. His conviction is unshaken. Let his accusers beware, lest in putting him to death they be really fighting against God. Cp. Gamaliel in Acts v. 39.

13. *your ways and your doings*] See on vii. 3.

your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that
 14 he hath pronounced against you. But as for me, behold,
 I am in your hand: do with me as is good and right in
 15 your eyes. Only know ye for certain that, if ye put me to
 death, ye shall bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and
 upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of
 a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these
 16 words in your ears. Then said the princes and all the
 people unto the priests and to the prophets: This man
 is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the
 17 name of the LORD our God. Then rose up certain of the
 elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the
 18 people, saying, ¹Micaiah the Morashtite prophesied in
 the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spake to all
 the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts:
²Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become
 heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of
 19 a forest. Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put
 him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and intreat

¹ Another reading is, *Micah*. See Micah i. 1. ² See Micah iii. 12.

16—19. See introd. summary to ch.

16. The princes, not being prejudiced as were Jeremiah's accusers, give a fair decision and carry the people with them.

17. *the elders of the land*] Certain elders support this proceeding by the precedent of Micah. We find frequent mention of the employment of leading men for administrative or judicial purposes (Deut. xix. 12, xxi. 2 ff.; 1 Sam. xvi. 4; 1 Kgs xxi. 8, 11), or simply as representatives of the people. See Num. xi. 16 (C.B.), also Ex. iii. 16, 18, iv. 29, xvii. 5 f., xviii. 12.

18. *Micaiah*] So MT. reads in its text. *Micah* in its mg. is of course the Minor Prophet.

Morashtite] native of Morésheth, a small town near Gath, about 23 miles S.W. of Jerusalem.

Zion shall be plowed, etc] Mic. iii. 12; the only citation by name of another prophet's utterance in the whole of prophetic literature.

the mountain of the house] i.e. the Temple, as standing on Mount Moriah.

as the high places of a forest] better, *wooded heights*. "The temple mount shall be overgrown with low brushwood." C.B. (Cheyne) on Micah, *l.c.*

19. *Did Hezekiah...put him at all to death?*] The words of Micah

the favour of the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus should we commit great evil against our own souls. And there 20 was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: and when Jehoiakim the 21

had been to the full as harsh-sounding as any that had been uttered by Jeremiah. Jeremiah was attacked for predicting the fall of the Temple and city; but Micah had said the same thing and no action was taken against him. The precedent supplied by the case of the former prophet therefore, the elders argue, is in favour of him who is now attacked. The passage is important as shewing that the reforms of Hezekiah were far from being attributable to the influence of Isaiah alone.

intreat the favour] lit. *smooth the face*, i.e. remove the frown (of an offended deity), appease; an anthropomorphism. Cp. Zech. vii. 2, viii. 21f.; Mal. i. 9.

the LORD repented] The LXX here, as in vv. 3, 13, render *ceased*, from dislike to any expression savouring to their minds of anthropomorphism. But the word serves at any rate to remind us that "all prophecy is conditional. The prophets declare the great principles of God's moral government, and apply them to individual cases. But, if the moral conditions of the cases to which these principles are applied be altered, the threatening or the promise is postponed, modified, or recalled." C.B. (Cheyne) on Micah, *l.c.* In the present case the destruction here described was never altogether fulfilled. Co. points out the special interest that attaches to the above episode, as indicating what a deep impression the utterances of a prophet made upon the people, even after the lapse of a century.

20—24. See introd. summary to ch. The story is introduced by the compiler (probably Baruch) to illustrate the risk to which Jeremiah was exposed; perhaps also to contrast Jeremiah's courage and Uriah's cowardice. Du. suggests that the occurrence took place at the same Feast, but at a moment when the king was himself present, and that Uriah's words may have specially pointed at him as the *protégé* of Egypt. Co. holds that, as the incident can hardly have occurred before Jeremiah's prophecy—otherwise the latter would not have produced such an excitement—it must be considered to have been subsequent to it. He places v. 24, as being the natural ending of the narrative concerning Jeremiah himself, before vv. 20—23; but against such transposition we may hold that the point of v. 24 is the contrast between the case of the friendless Uriah and that of Jeremiah. In 21—23 the LXX omit various names and otherwise abbreviate.

20. *Kiriath-jearim*] perhaps *Karyet-el-Enab* seven miles N.W. of Jerusalem on the road to Joppa (Jaffa).

king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt: 22 and Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and certain men with him, 23 into Egypt: and they fetched forth Uriah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of 24 the ¹common people. But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

¹ Heb. *sons of the people*.

21. *with all his mighty men*] The LXX omit, and the expression is not found elsewhere in the Book.

22. *Elnathan...into Egypt*] omitted by LXX and perhaps a gloss. Gi. points out that what we read of him in xxxvi. 12, 25 would make such an act as this on his part unlikely. On the other hand it is difficult for this very reason to understand his name being inserted here by a copyist. If he is to be identified with the E. mentioned in 2 Kgs xxiv. 8, he was father-in-law to Jehoiakim.

23. *they fetched forth Uriah out of Egypt*] As Jehoiakim was a vassal of Egypt (2 Kgs xxiii. 34), the extradition of a man accused of treason was easily effected.

common people] For *mg. sons of the people* cp. xvii. 19.

24. *Ahikam the son of Shaphan*] He was one of the five sent by Josiah (2 Kgs xxii. 12) to consult Huldah. His son Gedaliah, as governor of the land (xxxix. 14, xl. 5), stood the prophet's friend subsequently. It was in the chamber of another son of Shaphan, Gemariah, that Baruch read Jeremiah's Roll in the ears of the people (xxxvi. 12).

The exact connexion of this *v.* with the rest of the story is not clear. It may refer back to the outburst of popular indignation mentioned in *v.* 8, and so may mean that, in contrast to Uriah's fate, Jeremiah was on this occasion saved by Ahikam.

CHS. XXVII.—XXIX. SPEEDY DELIVERANCE FROM BABYLON IS NOT TO BE HOPED FOR.

These three chapters belong to the time of Zedekiah. The power of Babylon had already been demonstrated as to Judah. Some of the people had been carried captive, and the present king existed as such only upon sufferance. Under these circumstances the neighbouring nations were willing to make common cause with the Jews against their foe, while in Palestine there were still many who would not believe that the danger from Babylon was anything more than a passing one. In

In the beginning of the reign of ¹Jehoiakim the son of 27

¹ Properly, *Zedekiah*, as in some ancient authorities. See vv. 3, 12, 20, ch. xxviii. 1.

these three chs. therefore Jeremiah sets himself to correct the most pressing evil, namely this notion of the possibility of getting rid of the power which had become paramount in the Eastern world. In this ch. he addresses on the subject (vv. 1—11) the neighbouring nations; (12—15) Zedekiah; (16—22) the priests and people concerning the false prophets; (in ch. xxviii.) the false prophets themselves; (in ch. xxix.) the exiles in Babylon.

These three chapters were apparently placed immediately after ch. xxvi., as dealing with the same topic, viz. Jeremiah's vehement controversy with the false prophets. They have marked characteristics, differentiating them from the main part of the Book, and suggesting that they once existed independently. Thus (i) the MT. has a much fuller text than the LXX, and appears to have received considerable amplification, especially in chs. xxvii. and xxix.; (ii) differences of spelling appear in the proper names Jehoiakim, Josiah, Jeremiah, Zedekiah, Jechoniah, Hananiah (for Nebuchadnezzar's name in this connexion see on xxi. 2); (iii) "the prophet" is here added to Jeremiah's name much more frequently than in the rest of the Book. If all three chs. were, as Gi. suggests, copied out and sent to Babylon for the special behoof of the exiles, it is easy to understand that just such divergencies might appear from the influence of the errors and additions (e.g. the greater part of xxvii. 22) naturally arising in MSS. transcribed in Babylon, if these were brought into comparison with the copies remaining in Palestine. Again, considering the general agreement of chs. xxvii. and xxviii. as regards aim, we find their mutual relations somewhat perplexing. Ch. xxvii. is diffuse and somewhat vague, ch. xxviii. on the whole definite and concise; the former is in the first person, the latter almost altogether in the third. To this we may add that ch. xxvii. was originally (see below) without a time-heading, while ch. xxviii. has one of an unusually definite character. It is likely, however, that this last should stand at the head of ch. xxvii., embracing both chs., and thus forming an additional link between them. Co., emphasizing the closeness of connexion in the two chs., accounts for the difference in style by attributing the latter to Baruch, while ch. xxvii. and ch. xxix. also have been worked up and expanded by a later hand. Du. also considers that parts of xxvii. and xxviii. are to be ascribed to Baruch, but that the remainder of both chs. is later. He compares the relation of the additional parts of ch. xxvii. and the nucleus by Baruch to that between chs. vii. ff. and ch. xxvi.

CH. XXVII. 1—22. WARNING TO NEIGHBOURING NATIONS AND TO THE JEWS.

1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim*] It is clear from vv. 3, 12, and 20 that for *Jehoiakim* we must read (with mg.) *Zedekiah*

Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah from
 2 the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD to me: Make thee
 3 bands and ¹bars, and put them upon thy neck; and send
 them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to
 the king of the children of Ammon, and to the king of
 Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the
 messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king
 4 of Judah; and give them a charge unto their masters,
 saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
 5 Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I have made the
 earth, the man and the beast that are upon the face of the

¹ See Lev. xxvi. 13.

(so Syr.). The LXX omit the verse. It is a later insertion in the text either in its present form, or more probably with Zedekiah's name, as in ch. xxviii. 1, whence the time-heading should probably be transposed here (see above). The substitution of "Jehoiakim" may have arisen through the influence of xxvi. 1.

2—11. Certain kings having sent to invite Zedekiah to join them in an attempt to overthrow the power of Babylon, Jeremiah warns them to desist as the attempt would be futile. Du. points out that Zedekiah's visit to Babylon (li. 59) about this time, whether voluntary or at the requisition of Nebuchadnezzar, may have had for one purpose the clearing himself from suspicion of being implicated in the proposed revolt, an unrest that may well have received a stimulus from the change of ruler in Egypt, Psammetichus II. succeeding his father Pharaoh-necoh in B.C. 594.

2. *bands and bars*] The former were to fasten the bars together, thus forming a yoke. For the symbolic action cp. 1 Kgs xxii. 11.

3. *and send them*] We should probably omit the pronoun, which (being in the Hebrew only one letter attached to the end of the verb) seems to have crept in under the influence of the preceding clause. It was the *warning* only that Jeremiah was to send. Du. points out that it was nothing unusual that an Israelitish prophet should be listened to with respect, when addressing a foreign nation (Jud. iii. 20; 1 Kgs xix. 15 ff.; Is. xviii. 2, xxi. 11 f.).

the messengers] rather (with LXX), *their messengers*. Ezekiel (xvii. 15) charges Zedekiah with taking the initiative in negotiations with Egypt against Babylon.

5. The terms of the message are these:—God, as Creator of the world and of all that is in it, has the right to give it to whomsoever He will. He has therefore placed Nebuchadnezzar in power for such time as it shall please Him, and none may resist His will.

the man...of the earth] LXX omit.

earth, by my great power and by my outstretched arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth right unto me. And now 6 have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve him. And all the 7 nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his own land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And 8 it shall come to pass, that the nation and the kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar king of

my outstretched arm] See on xxxii. 17.

6. *all these lands*] Gi. omits "these," as inserted with a view to the countries just mentioned. The LXX has simply "the earth," which is probably (Co. says "undoubtedly") right (Du. hesitates). Subsequent scruples as to attributing a *world-wide* dominion to the king of Babylon induced MT. and various versions to modify the statement.

the king of Babylon, my servant] See on xxv. 9.

and the beasts of the field] Cp. xxviii. 14; Dan. ii. 38.

7. *him, and his son, and his son's son*] If this prophecy be meant to be taken literally, it will signify that the power of Babylon would last for two generations of rulers after Nebuchadnezzar. According to profane history however it was more prolonged. Evil-Merodach (*Amil-Marduk*, *man* or *servant* of Marduk the chief Babylonian divinity), son and successor to Nebuchadnezzar (B.C. 561), reigned two years, or two years and a few months, according to the tablets dated in his reign. He was killed in a rebellion led by his sister's husband, Neriglissar (Nergal-Sharezer), who in three or four years was succeeded by a young son Laborosoarchod, murdered after a nine months' reign. Thus, unless the *v.* merely means that for the Jews or other nations there was to be no *speedy* riddance of Babylon, as the false prophets taught, it is at variance with history. It is possible that this fact may be the cause of its omission by LXX, but a view much to be preferred is that the apparently definite fixing of a termination to the power of Babylon, an announcement quite out of harmony with the context (cp. end of note on xxv. 11), stamps it as a gloss. As Co. (*Heb.* p. 70) says "The idea that the dominion of the Chaldeans is to be merely transitory...is decidedly inappropriate in this place, where it is much more to the interest of the prophet to depict the power of Nebuchadnezzar as terribly as possible."

the time of his own land come] As he acted, so shall he in like manner suffer.

many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him] See on xxv. 14.

Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the
 9 pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. But as for you, hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall
 10 not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should
 11 drive you out and ye should perish. But the nation that shall bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, that *nation* will I let remain in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

12 And I spake to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.
 13 Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken concerning the nation that will not serve the king of
 14 Babylon? And hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of
 15 Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, but they prophesy falsely in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish,

8. *which...N. king of Babylon*] not found in LXX, which also omits "and with the pestilence."

until I have consumed them by] It is best (so Gi.) by the change of one letter in MT. (a change deriving some support from the Targ.) to render, *until I have given them into*.

9. *dreams*] those which the diviners, etc. professed to have had. Cp. xxiii. 25, xxix. 8. We should have expected rather *dreamers* (so LXX Syr. Targ.), and MT. may have been introduced here from the analogy of the latter passage.

10. *to remove you*] not of course that this was the false prophets' aim, but that it would be the result of their advice, if adopted.

12—15. The warning to Zedekiah. The LXX, apparently through an accident in copying, omit much of these *vv.* They correspond in the main to the previous passage, the warning against the false prophets in *vv.* 14, 15 answering to that of *vv.* 9, 10. The plural is used throughout on account of many sympathisers among all ranks.

ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you. Also I spake 16
to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the
LORD: Hearken not to the words of your prophets that
prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD's
house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for
they prophesy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them; 17
serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this
city become a desolation? But if they be prophets, and 18
if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make
intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are
left in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king
of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. For thus 19
saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concern-
ing the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning
the residue of the vessels that are left in this city, which 20
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried
away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,
from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah

16—22. The same message is addressed to the priests and the people concerning the false prophets. More than half the contents of this part of the ch. are lacking in LXX, the main difference between them and MT. being that the latter includes the promise of the restoration of the sacred vessels to Jerusalem. Co. grants the LXX a *relative* originality, considering that the process of amplification is shewn in their Version in an earlier stage than that which is presented by the Hebrew.

16. *the priests*] who took the side of the false prophets against Jeremiah. See xxvi. 8 ff.

18. *that the vessels...Babylon*] omitted in LXX, and thus omitting any actual mention of a subject for their prayer. This harshness would naturally lead to such an addition as that in MT. For the idea of prophets as intercessors cp. Gen. xx. 7.

19—22 are much briefer in LXX, viz.: "For thus saith the LORD, And of the rest of the vessels, which the king of Babylon took not, when he carried away Jechonias from Jerusalem, they shall go to Babylon, saith the LORD."

19. The pillars, the sea (1 Kgs vii. 23 ff.), and the bases (1 Kgs vii. 27 ff.; 2 Chr. iv. 6) were broken up by the Chaldeans at Jerusalem (lii. 17), and thus could not in any case be restored. Various other treasures were restored by Cyrus (Ezra i. 7 ff.). Baruch vi. 8, however, speaks of "silver vessels which Sedekias the son of Josias king of Judah had made" as sent back in the lifetime of Jehoiachin.

20. *nobles*] The word is not pure Hebrew but Aramaic, and thus

- 21 and Jerusalem ; yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah, and at
 22 Jerusalem : They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be, until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD ; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.
- 28 And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azzur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the
 2 people, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of
 3 Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and
 4 carried them to Babylon : and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went to Babylon, saith the LORD :

may indicate that the clause is a later insertion. It occurs again in xxxix. 6, and in 1 Kgs xxi. 8, etc., but is found chiefly in Neh.

CH. XXVIII. 1—17. WARNING TO THE FALSE PROPHETS THROUGH HANANIAH. HANANIAH'S REJOINDER AND PUNISHMENT.

1. *in the beginning, etc.*] See on xxvii. 1. If, as seems likely, the utterance of Hananiah which follows was on the same day on which Jeremiah appeared in public, wearing a yoke on his neck (xxvii. 2), and that the messengers from abroad (*ib.* 3) had not yet departed, we can realise the effect which Hananiah's words of direct contradiction to Jeremiah's forecast (*ib.* 16) would produce.

Hananiah] one of the prophets of the national party, whose unauthorized predictions of peace and safety were among the severest trials to which Jeremiah had to submit. For the relation of the false to the true prophets see Intr. pp. xxxii. f. ; xxiii. 9, xxix. 8, 9, 31, 32. Cp. Ezek. xiii.

Gibeon] *El Jib*, about five miles N.W. of Jerusalem. It was one of the cities of the priests (Josh. xxi. 17).

3. *that Nebuchadnezzar...carried them to Babylon*] LXX omit.

4. *Jeconiah*] It shews that the exiled king must still have had a substantial following in Jerusalem, when Hananiah ventured upon this forecast in the face of the *de facto* ruler.

for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Then the 5 prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD, even the prophet 6 Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all them of the captivity, from Babylon unto this place. Nevertheless hear thou now 7 this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people: The prophets that have been before me and 8 before thee of old prophesied against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of 9 the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, ¹that the LORD hath truly sent him. Then Hananiah 10 the prophet took the bar from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in the presence 11 of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon within two full years from off the neck of all the nations. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way. Then the word 12

¹ Or, *whom the LORD hath truly sent*

7—9. The passage forms an important aid to our grasping of the real nature of O.T. prophecy. True prophets did not flatter with promises of good fortune, seeing that their aim was to preach repentance and reformation to a sinful world. Any future prosperity which they contemplated could only be subsequent to the purging away of evil by the Divine judgements. For such an attitude on the part of the prophet courage and self-denial were needed; hence the presumption was a safe one that one who spoke thus was sent by God, and so refused to pander from selfish motives to the wishes of his hearers. Nothing could avail against this argument in proof of the trustworthiness of the true prophet, except the actual fulfilment of his opponent's prediction to the contrary. It was probably as realising this that Hananiah, in spite of the risk of exposure involved, fixed an early date for the fulfilment of his pleasing forecast (*v.* 3), and thereupon had his own weapon turned against him (*vv.* 16 f.). For this passage cp. Deut. xviii. 22, also xiii. 1—3.

11. *And the prophet...went his way*] Co., maintaining that Jeremiah could not under the circumstances have been silent, rejects these words but Du. rightly pleads for their retention as entirely consonant with the

- of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the bar from off the neck of the prophet
- 13 Jeremiah, saying, Go, and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Thou hast broken the bars of wood; but thou
- 14 shalt make in their stead bars of iron. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.
- 15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; the LORD hath not sent thee; but
- 16 thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will send thee away from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou
- 17 hast spoken rebellion against the LORD. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

dignity and nobility of Jeremiah's character. Co. considers them as inserted by a later hand and suggested by "go and tell" of v. 13.

12—17. Jeremiah's emphatic contradiction of Hananiah's forecast.

13. *thou shalt make*] LXX (better) *I will make*.

bars of iron] Hananiah's act would only serve, by exciting the Jews to resistance, to render the servitude which they should undergo more harsh.

14. *and they shall...field also*] LXX (probably rightly) omit. The insertion may have been suggested by xxvii. 6, where see note.

16. *because thou hast spoken rebellion against the LORD*] LXX omit. The words seem to have been introduced from Deut. xiii. 5, where, however, as Gi. points out, unlike the present passage, idolatry is spoken of.

17. *in the seventh month*] i.e. within two months (see v. 1).

CH. XXIX. 1—32. JEREMIAH'S LETTER OF WARNING TO THE EXILES. THE CASE OF SHEMAIAH.

The section may be subdivided as follows. (i) vv. 1—3. Heading. (ii) vv. 4—9. The exiles are bidden to settle down in Babylon and give no heed to the false prophets. (iii) vv. 10—14. Not till after seventy years shall they return. (iv) vv. 15—19. Zedekiah and his people shall be visited for their sins with permanent captivity. (v) vv. 20—23. The lying prophets in Babylon shall be punished. (vi) vv. 24—32. Shemaiah the Nehelamite is denounced. For the general characteristics of the ch. see introductory notes to chs. xxvii.—xxix. We may gather from the style, as well as from its use of the Books of Kings,

Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the 29 prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders of the captivity, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon: (after that Jeconiah 2 the king, and the queen-mother, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;) by the hand of 3 Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of

that it has been augmented, especially in the later part (after *v.* 13), from other sources, and mostly, perhaps, by contributions from the hand of Baruch, by whom also it is very probable that Jeremiah's letter forming the earlier part of the ch. was supplied. Thus that letter may safely be reckoned as genuine, at least in the somewhat shorter form in which the LXX give it.

The date of the letter is somewhat earlier than that of chs. xxvii., xxviii., as it will probably have preceded Zedekiah's own visit to Babylon (li. 59) in his 4th year (B.C. 594). It is the earliest surviving example from O.T. times of an epistle. See interesting remarks in Deissmann's *Bible Studies*, p. 40 (Eng. ed., Edinburgh, 1901), relating to its bearing upon the Apocryphal "Epistle of Jeremiah."

1. *Now these are the words of the letter*] The exiles in Babylon were subjected to the same danger from false prophets predicting a speedy return (cp. Ezek. xiii.), as were their fellow countrymen who remained at home. Jeremiah earnestly deprecates such a belief, and insists that the punishment would last for seventy years.

the residue] The reference of the word is obscure, but it may allude (so Du.) to some disaster, well known at the time. LXX omit the word, and so Gi.

and to the priests...to Babylon] Du. omits all these words, holding that Jeremiah addressed the letter to the elders alone. Co. agrees. Gi. now (2nd ed.) rejects the latter part ("whom...to Babylon"), which is absent from LXX. Moreover, he and others consider the whole or the greater part of *v.* 2 to be an expansion.

2. The letter appears to have been later than ch. xxiv., to which it plainly alludes more than once. Cp. *v.* 17 with xxiv. 2, 8, and *v.* 18 with xxiv. 9.

the queen-mother] Nehushta. See on ch. xiii. 18.

the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen, and the smiths] Cp. ch. xxiv. 1, with note on "smiths."

were departed] not merely, had surrendered, as the same verb in the Heb. means in the parallel passage, 2 Kgs xxiv. 12, but, as the amplification "the craftsmen and the smiths" here indicates, had gone into exile.

3. *Elasah*] As the son of Shaphan he was probably brother of

Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon
 4 to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying, Thus saith
 the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all the captivity,
 whom I have caused to be carried away captive from
 5 Jerusalem unto Babylon: Build ye houses, and dwell in
 6 them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take
 ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for
 your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they
 may bear sons and daughters; and multiply ye there, and
 7 be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither
 I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto
 the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have
 8 peace. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
 Let not your prophets that be in the midst of you, and your
 diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to your dreams
 9 which ye ¹cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely
 unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the

¹ Or, *dream*

Ahikam (xxvi. 24) who, taking Jeremiah's side in political matters, would be well received at Babylon.

Gemariah] Perhaps his father was identical with the chief priest (2 Kgs xxii. 4).

4—9. See introd. note to section. Instead of looking for an immediate return to Palestine, which would cause the exiles to sit loose to the country where they found themselves, they were to be interested in its welfare and to make homes for themselves. Otherwise they would not only fail to obtain any influence, but would soon dwindle away.

7. *seek the peace of the city*] probably referring not to Babylon only, but to any city in which a body of exiles might be planted. LXX have *the land*, as in iv. 29 (see note), perhaps reading here, as they probably did there, the equivalent Hebrew.

8. *cause to be dreamed*] mg. *dream*. The MT., as it stands, gives the sense as in the text, but its form is Aramaic rather than Hebrew and the causative sense is not wanted. The apparent error has arisen from the accidental repetition of one letter in the original. Co., however, would read *they dream*, because in xxiii. 25, 27 f. it is the false prophets who use dreams as the vehicle of their prophecies. Du. considers vv. 8—10 to be from a later hand, and Co. is disposed to agree with him as to 8 and 9.

10—14. Not till after seventy years shall they return.

LORD. For thus saith the LORD, After seventy years be ¹⁰ accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, ¹¹ saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you ¹² ¹hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, ¹² and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall ¹³ search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of ¹⁴ you, saith the LORD, and I will ²turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you

¹ Heb. *a latter end and hope.*

² Or, *return to*

10. *After seventy years]* See on xxv. 11.

for Babylon] The announcement has respect to the duration of the empire of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, and only secondarily to the consequent limitation of the captivity.

my good word] My gracious promise. See xxiv. 4—7.

11. *For I know]* an assurance on Jehovah's part that He forgets them not, even though they be far from their proper land.

the thoughts that I think] i.e. My purposes.

hope in your latter end] For mg. *a latter end and hope* cp. Prov. xxiii. 18, xxiv. 14, 20.

12. The MT. is awkward, as it stands. The LXX have merely "and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you."

14. The LXX have only "And I will be found of you" (lit. "I will appear to you"). The remaining words are evidently a later addition, relating to a *general* dispersion, and thus unsuitable to the present context.

turn again your captivity] The Hebrew expression here and elsewhere probably means simply *to restore the fortunes*. See C.B. Ps. xiv. 7.

15—19. The impending fate of Zedekiah and his people. Cp. xxiv. 8—10.

15. This *v.* naturally links with *vv.* 21 ff., while the intervening *vv.* make an apparent severance in the logical connexion, and are absent from LXX, except in a certain recension (Lucianic), where, however, they *precede v.* 15. With this transposition, as at least modifying the objection arising from the break of logical connexion, Gi. agrees, maintaining, as he does, their genuineness. Co. (and so Du.) refuses to consider the *vv.* as belonging to the original letter, making *vv.* 16—18 to be in substance a reproduction of xxiv. 8 f., *v.* 19 to have its origin in xxiv. 4 ff. and parallel passages, and *v.* 20 to be taking up the line of

- 15 to be carried away captive. For ye have said, The LORD
 16 hath raised us up prophets in Babylon. For thus saith the
 LORD concerning the king that sitteth upon the throne of
 David, and concerning all the people that dwell in this city,
 your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity;
 17 thus saith the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will send upon
 them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will
 make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so
 18 bad. And I will pursue after them with the sword, with
 the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them
 to be ¹tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the
 earth, to be an execration, and an astonishment, and an
 hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither
 19 I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to
 my words, saith the LORD, wherewith I sent unto them my
 servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them;
 20 but ye would not hear, saith the LORD. Hear ye therefore

¹ Or, *a terror unto*

thought anew from *v.* 16. Dr. suggests that, as the passage seems out of place in a letter to the Jews in Babylonia, dealing as it does with the fate of the Jerusalem Jews, it belongs only to the recension of that letter which subsequently was incorporated in this Book. If we are to abide by the MT. in the matter, the sense appears to be this: One of the difficulties raised by the exiles when the prospect of seventy years' captivity was held out to them would be, We have prophets here at Babylon who tell us just the reverse of all this. Which shall we believe? To this the reply of Jeremiah is twofold. (i) These prophets' teaching shall soon be disproved. The king and the remnants of the kingdom, upon whose continued existence at Jerusalem they lay such stress, will soon pass away. Ye shall not soon be restored to your brethren, but they shall be exiles and scattered like to you. (ii) The false prophets, who thus delude you, shall themselves miserably perish and become a proverb and by-word.

For] rather, *Because*, connecting this *v.* directly with *v.* 21. "Because ye congratulate yourselves on having prophets in your exile, I tell you how soon ye shall discover that they are valueless."

16. *the king*] Zedekiah. See xxviii. 1. See note on *v.* 24.

17. *vile figs*] Cp. xxiv. 2—8.

18. For the general sense and language of the *v.* cp. xix. 8, xxiv. 9, xxv. 18, xlii. 18.

tossed to and fro] mg. *a terror unto*. See on xv. 4, where the Heb. verb is the same.

the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes; and of them shall be taken up a curse by 22 all the captives of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire: because they have 23 wrought folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken words in my name falsely, which I commanded them not; and I am he that knoweth, and am witness, saith the LORD.

20—23. The prophets in Babylonia, of whom the exiles speak in *v.* 15, shall perish by a cruel death.

20. This *v.* is an insertion, to connect the preceding interpolation with what follows.

21. Of these two prophets nothing further is known. The LXX omit the fathers' names, and the words "which prophesy...name." Co. denies, while Du. and Gi. admit, the historical accuracy of the story, Du. pointing out that, had the prediction not been fulfilled, the passage would not have appeared in the Book.

Kolaiah, *curse* (kēlâlâh) and *roasted* (kâlâh) are three such similar words that a play on them as used in these verses seems intended. The son of *Kolaiah* was to be called Kēlâlâh (a curse) because the king of Babylon kâlâh (roasted) him in the fire. It may have been for sedition or for an attack on Babylonian worship that the two met their end.

23. *folly*] The Hebrew denotes more than this, viz. "a state of mind or an action, marked by utter disregard of moral or spiritual feeling." Dr. who illustrates the kind of immorality here referred to in the word by its use in Gen. xxxiv. 7; 2 Sam. xiii. 12. See further in his *Parallel Psalter*, p. 457. The punishment inflicted, while really the penalty for transgressions against Jehovah, was doubtless ostensibly for breaches of the religious or civil law of Babylon.

falsely] not in LXX, and probably introduced from *v.* 21.

he that knoweth, and am witness] The Hebrew as it stands is awkward. Probably "he that knoweth" (absent from LXX) is a gloss.

24—32. Shemaiah the Nehelamite rebuked and threatened.

On the arrival at Babylon of Jeremiah's letter, which ends with *v.* 23, there is much indignation on the part of the false prophets, and one of

- 24 And ¹concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite thou shalt
 25 speak, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of
 Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thine own
 name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and to
 Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the
 26 priests, saying, The LORD hath made thee priest in the
 stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers in

¹ Or, *unto*

them, Shemaiah by name, writes to Zephaniah the acting high-priest, urging upon him that he should take severe measures to silence Jeremiah as a madman. This suggestion, however, Zephaniah is so far from following that he shews the letter to the prophet, who writes again to Babylon, this time for the purpose of condemning Shemaiah's conduct in the severest terms, and announcing its penalty.

The narrative forms an interesting supplement to the earlier part of the ch. Its form, it is true, leaves much to be desired, and Du. in fact describes it as exhibiting utter confusion, resulting from successive modifications. It is clearly one of the additions made by Baruch or by later hands. The charge brought by Jeremiah is introduced by the "Because" of v. 25, and continuing to the end of v. 28, remains incomplete. It is thus of the nature of the figure of speech called anacoluthon, and is taken up again by the "Because" of v. 31, a sentence which is carried by the "therefore, etc." of v. 32 to its logical conclusion. The LXX fail, either from the defective condition of the Hebrew text or otherwise, to see that vv. 26—28 consist of Shemaiah's letter from Babylon. Thus for "saying...to Jerusalem" (v. 25) they substitute (suggested apparently by v. 31) "I did not send thee in my name," as though it were a Divine utterance addressed to Shemaiah. Moreover, they are obliged in v. 27 both to omit the negative and to make Jeremiah speak of himself in the 3rd person. Lastly, there is in their rendering no clue to the contents of "the letter" of v. 29.

24. *concerning*] mg. *unto*. Cp. v. 31.

the Nehelamite] The place or family referred to is not otherwise known.

25. *in thine own name*] not, as Jeremiah spoke, in the name of the Lord.

unto all the people that are at Jerusalem] LXX rightly omit.

Zephaniah] See on xxi. 1 (which however belongs to a somewhat later time than this). In ch. lii. 24 = 2 Kgs xxv. 18 he is called "second priest," i.e. next in rank to the high-priest.

and to all the priests] LXX rightly omit.

26. This and the two following verses give us the words of Shemaiah's letter to Zephaniah, as quoted in Jeremiah's reply.

thee] Zephaniah.

in the stead of Jehoiada] See on xx. 1. The title "officers" here is

the house of the LORD, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in the stocks and in ¹shackles. Now therefore, why hast thou 27 not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you, forasmuch as he hath sent unto us in 28 Babylon, saying, *The captivity is long: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them?* And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the 29 ears of Jeremiah the prophet. Then came the word of the 30 LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Send to all them of the 31 captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he hath caused you to trust in a lie; therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will 32 punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed; he shall not have a man to dwell among this people, neither shall

¹ Or, *the collar*

the same in the original as the one given there to Pashhur. It is possible that the reference may be to the high-priest in the days of Joash (2 Kgs xi. 4 ff.), who "appointed officers over the house of the LORD" (v. 18). It is best here, however, with LXX, Targ. and other authorities to read "to be an officer."

that is mad] Madness was looked on in the East as a sort of gift of prophecy perverted. Cp. "mad" (same Heb.) in 2 Kgs ix. 11; Hos. ix. 7.

the stocks] See on ch. xx. 2.

shackles] mg. rightly, *the collar*. The word is found here only in the Heb., but a cognate Arabic word indicates that it is an iron band fastened round the neck.

27. *maketh himself a prophet*] plays the part of a prophet, acts excitedly, like the dervishes of the present day. Cp. 1 Sam. x. 10, 12 f., xviii. 10, xix. 20 ff.

29. *read this letter, etc.*] shewing thereby that he was in sympathy with the prophet.

31. *hath prophesied*] the first explicit statement that Shemaiah was a prophet.

32. *therefore thus saith the LORD*] For the construction see note on vv. 24—32.

he shall not...the good] But Shemaiah could no more than Jeremiah himself hope to see the far distant day of return. Thus the LXX reading is to be preferred, "there shall not be a man of them" (i.e. of his descendants) "in the midst of you to see the good."

he behold the good that I will do unto my people, saith the LORD: because he hath spoken rebellion against the LORD.

30 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

because he...LORD] absent from LXX as in xxviii. 16 (see note there). Here they have instead the words "They shall not see," originally no doubt a marg. gloss on the "behold" earlier in the v.

CHS. XXX.—XXXIII.

Hitherto the general tone of Jeremiah's prophecies has been gloomy. Any gleams of brightness that have from time to time appeared (e.g. iii. 14, xvi. 14 f., xxiii. 3), even if we may assume them to have come from the prophet's own mouth, have borne but a very small proportion to the long stretches of melancholy foreboding and stern declaration of coming punishment, which have formed the gist of his prophecies. In chs. xxx.—xxxiii. we have a marked change in this respect, and the whole tone here is that of hope. As regards the component parts and dates of the chs. see notes below. We may divide the whole prophecy into three parts. (i) "The triumphal hymn of Israel's salvation" (Hengst.), xxx., xxxi. (ii) The purchase by Jeremiah of a field in Anathoth with an explanation of the significance of this act, xxxii. (iii) Promise of restoration of the nation with renewed glory conferred on the house of David and the Levitical priesthood, xxxiii.

CHS. XXX. 1—XXXI. 40. PROMISES OF NATIONAL RESTORATION.

These chs. form an interruption to the mainly biographical portion of the Book, which otherwise runs on, with short breaks, from ch. xxvi. to ch. xlv. inclusive, while here we have prophetic utterances only. The two chs. form a closely connected whole, and deal with the future of Israel and Judah. Moreover, their subject-matter in its order of thought is evidently arranged with care. Graf, developing hints given by Ewald, and pointing to the prophetic custom illustrated in Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Micah, of closing with a brighter picture and with Messianic hopes, holds these chs. to be the corresponding conclusion of Jeremiah's Roll as published in its second edition (xxxvi. 32). He finds a close link in turns of expression with ch. iii. and other earlier parts of the Book, and so dates these chs. in Jehoiakim's reign. To this Co. objects that the chs. are composed from a later standpoint, and that they assume the destruction of Jerusalem and the commencement of the exile to have taken place already. He is supported by Du. and Gi. in holding that we have here certain genuine utterances of Jeremiah (e.g. all three agree in accepting xxxi. 2—5,

Thus speaketh the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, Write ² thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.

15—20) with much amplification by later hands. Thus Gi. calls the section a "mosaic," made up, as much of it is, from various passages of Jeremiah and other prophets. The main disagreement among these three commentators is in the case of the very important and striking passage, xxxi. 31—34, which is given up, though very reluctantly, by Du., but retained by the others (see further in notes on that passage). Movers, de Wette, and Hitzig led the way in breaking up the chs. into their component parts. Further, however, they were for attributing the post-Jeremianic parts to the authorship of the second Isaiah, a view which Graf energetically and successfully combated. Stade and Smend went further, maintaining that the whole is post-exilic.

Accepting the view that the date of composition was subsequent to the final overthrow of Jerusalem, and that we have here genuine prophecies of Jeremiah, more or less overlaid with additional matter, we may still enquire why these two chs. of encouragement and hope were interposed in the course of the narrative portion (chs. xxvi.—xliv.) at this point. The answer seems to be (so Co.) that the insertion here was suggested to the compiler as suitable not only by the words in xxix. 32 ("the good that I will do unto my people"), but by the whole tenor of that ch., as forecasting a future rich in comfort and in the favour of God. A further reason may be that ch. xxix. formed a fitting transition, as being itself a combination of prophecy and narrative.

Two points emerge from the discussion as fairly established; (i) that ch. xxxi., but not ch. xxx., contains a large amount of authentic matter, and (ii) that "the compiler felt that the prominence of Northern Israel [ch. xxxi.] threw Judah into the background, and this largely accounts for the additions [ch. xxx.] which he made." Pe.

We may summarize the whole section as follows. (i) ch. xxx. vv. 1—4. Jeremiah is bidden to write all the LORD's words in a book, for Israel and Judah shall be brought back from captivity. (ii) vv. 5—22. Terrors are coming on the world, but Jacob shall be delivered. Israel, though not left unpunished, need not fear the destruction that is coming on the nations. Bitter indeed are her pains by reason of her sins, but, as her despoilers have done to her, so shall it be done to them, while, with city rebuilt and under a ruler rejoicing in Jehovah's favour, the people shall dwell in prosperity and peace. (iii) vv. 23, 24. Jehovah shall be fully avenged on the wicked. This will be evident to His people in the end. (iv) ch. xxxi. vv. 1—9. The Northern tribes shall again find favour and Samaria shall be re-inhabited: there follows a vivid picture of the return journey. (v) vv. 10—14. Announcement of this restoration to the nations. (vi) vv. 15—22. Rachel, lamenting from her grave near Ramah her banished children, is addressed in words of comfort: Ephraim's penitential mood is welcomed with affection by the LORD; the virgin of Israel is summoned to address herself to the journey.

- 3 For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will ¹turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.
- 4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning
- 5 Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the LORD: We have heard a voice of trembling, ²of fear, and not of
- 6 peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned
- 7 into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is

¹ Or, *return to*

² Or, *there is fear, and no peace*

(vii) *vv.* 23—26. Judah also shall be brought back and shall inhabit Zion. (viii) *vv.* 27—30. Jehovah will renew the youth of Israel and Judah; the sons shall no longer suffer for the sins of their progenitors. (ix) *vv.* 31—34. The great prophecy of the New Covenant, whose principle shall be no code of outward ordinances, but an inly operating law, filling all with the knowledge of God. (x) *vv.* 35—40. Israel shall be established in security as Jehovah's people, and Jerusalem, extended beyond her former limits, shall be holy to the LORD for ever.

1—4. Introduction to the section. The standpoint (see above) is that of one writing after the final catastrophe (B.C. 586), but this fact is of course by no means inconsistent with Jeremiah's authorship. Moreover, the words of comfort that follow harmonize with his commission "to build and to plant" (i. 10).

The greater part of the ch. follows a regular three beat metre or is in the *Kinah* measure.

3. *turn again the captivity*] See on xxix. 14.

5—22. See introd. note to section. For a parallel in the character of the description in *vv.* 5—11, Dr. compares Is. xiii. 6—15 (the overthrow of Babylon) followed by Is. xiv. 1 f. (the deliverance of Israel); also Is. xxiv. 14, 15, 23, xxv. 1—5.

5. *We have heard...of peace*] Jehovah is quoting the words of consternation which He hears the people uttering; but more probably the words "Thus saith the LORD" are the insertion of a scribe, and it is really the people who are speaking.

of fear, and not of peace] mg. (better) *there is fear, and no peace.*

6. *Men* do not suffer the pangs of child-bearing. Why then do all shew signs of pain and terror? Cp. Is. xiii. 8.

7. *that day*] The expression "the day of the LORD," in an eschatological sense, is found first in Amos (v. 18), and is adopted by later prophets. Its meaning is developed in two directions according

like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. And it shall come to pass in that day, 8 saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bands; and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the 9 LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O Jacob my 10 servant, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. For 11

to the teaching which the individual prophet desires to convey. Jehovah, they taught, will some day manifest Himself, it may be in executing terrible judgement upon the sin either of His own nation or of others; but it may also be in the restoration of the former to the privileges which they had forfeited. The description is modified in each case by the occasion; e.g. Is. ii. 12 ff. directs the judgement against the material wealth and luxury acquired in the days of Uzziah. Joel (ii. 1 ff.) illustrates the punishment by a recent scourge of locusts. Cp. Zeph. i. 7, 14 ff. Here, and in later prophecy in general (see above for the date of this section), the Day results in Israel's deliverance, a deliverance reached, however, only through suffering.

so that none is like it] The Heb. may be rendered, *Whence is any like it?* Cp. x. 6.

he shall be saved out of it] Here we have the transition to the joyous note which dominates the rest of the prophecy.

8. *thy neck...thy bands]* rather (with LXX) the 3rd person in both cases. It is a description of Israel's future deliverance, not an address to him. Dr. suggests that the scribe who substituted "thy" may have had Is. x. 27 in his mind.

bands] The Heb. is the word so rendered in the text of xxvii. 2, where see note.

serve themselves of him] For the phrase cp. xxv. 14, xxvii. 7.

9. *the LORD their God, and David their king]* For the whole expression as uniting Jehovah and the Messiah, cp. Hos. iii. 5, and for the Messiah spoken of elsewhere also under the name David, Ezek. xxxiv. 23 f., xxxvii. 24 f.

10, 11. These *vv.* occur again in xlvi. 27 f. They are found there, but not here, in LXX. It is not improbable that they existed separately and were inserted later in both places independently. V. 10 bears a strong resemblance to 2 Isaiah (e.g. Is. xliii. 5 ff.).

10. *from afar]* from thy distant land of exile.

none shall make him afraid] Cp. Is. xvii. 2 (flocks lying undisturbed).

I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise ¹leave thee unpunished.

- 12 For thus saith the LORD, Thy hurt is incurable, and thy
 13 wound grievous. There is none to plead ²thy cause, ³that
 thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines.
 14 All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not: for
 I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the
 chastisement of a cruel one; for the ⁴greatness of thine
 15 iniquity, because thy sins were increased. Why criest thou
⁵for thy hurt? thy pain is incurable: for the ⁴greatness of
 thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased, I have done
 16 these things unto thee. Therefore all they that devour thee

¹ Or, *hold thee guiltless*
hast no medicines nor plaister

² Or, *thy cause: for thy wound thou*

³ Heb. *for closing up, or, pressing.*

⁴ Or, *multitude*

⁵ Or, *for thy hurt, because thy pain is incurable?*

11. *I will correct thee with judgement*] See on x. 24.

12—15. These *vv.* are either Jeremiah's own (so Du.) or a close imitation of his style.

12. *Thy hurt is incurable*] lit. *It is ill with thy hurt.* Similar words are applied by the prophet to himself in xv. 18.

The pronouns in the *v.* are fem. as referring to the *nation*, as in xxii. 20 and often elsewhere. For the whole *v.* cp. Lam. ii. 13.

13. In the same *v.* the people of God appears both as defendant in a suit at law, and as one suffering from a wound which cannot be staunched.

There is none to plead thy cause] Thine enemies at present are having it all their own way, as they arraign thee for thy sins before the bar of God's justice.

that thou mayest be bound up] rather, as mg. *for thy wound thou hast no medicines nor plaister.* "Wound" is lit. a compressed (i.e. bound up) thing. Cp. Hos. v. 13 twice; Obad. 7 mg.

medicines] **plaister**, lit. *that which goes up* (on the wound).

14. *thy lovers*] See on xxii. 20.

for the greatness, etc.] mg. *multitude.* Probably the latter part of the *v.* has been accidentally introduced from *v.* 15, where it suits the context better.

16. *Therefore*] Because thou hast undergone thy portion of suffering and it is plain that none other than Myself can deliver thee. For the general sense cp. Is. xiv. 2, li. 22 f. Co. points out that the logical force of the word is not evident. Why should the sins of Judah

shall be devoured ; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity ; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. For I will restore ¹health unto thee, and I will heal thee of ¹⁷thy wounds, saith the LORD ; because they have called thee an outcast, *saying*, It is Zion, whom no man ²seeketh after. Thus saith the LORD : Behold, I will ³turn again the captivity ¹⁸of Jacob's tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places ; and the city shall be builded upon her own ⁴heap, and the palace shall ⁵remain after the manner thereof. And out of ¹⁹them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that

¹ See ch. viii. 22.

² Or, *careth for*

³ Or, *return to*

⁴ Or, *mound* Heb. *tel*.

⁵ Or, *be inhabited*

be the reason for their enemies being overthrown? Accordingly, he transposes vv. 16 and 17, and begins v. 17 with "I" (*'ānōki*) instead of "For" (*ki*). This change, combined with others which he here makes, seems too drastic to be accepted with confidence.

all they that devour thee] See on ii. 3.

shall go into captivity] The LXX, by a slight variation from MT., have *shall eat their own flesh*, a reading which Co. supports from Is. xlix. 26. The meaning will then be, *shall engage in internecine strife*. For this thought cp. Ezek. xxxviii. 21 ; Hag. ii. 22 ; Zech. xiv. 13.

17. *I will restore health unto thee*] better, *I will bring new flesh upon thee*. See on viii. 22, also xxxiii. 6.

Zion] The LXX, reading the end of the word somewhat differently, render *prey*. This Co. prefers. The enemy, he would explain, consider Zion and her sons as a free hunting ground, where they may range about and devour at will.

seeketh after] mg. *careth for*. Cp. Deut. xi. 12 ; Ps. cxlii. 4.

18. *turn again the captivity*] See on xxix. 14.

upon her own heap] meaning the hill on which she had previously stood, on her old site. A hill was the usual position of the Eastern cities (Matt. v. 14), as helping to protect them alike from sudden attack and from inundation. Hence the frequency with which the word *Tel* (which is the Hebrew here translated *heap*) forms part of the name of a city ; Telassar (2 Kgs xix. 12 ; Is. xxxvii. 12) ; Tel-harsha and Tel-melah (Ezra ii. 59 ; Neh. vii. 61) ; Tel-abib (Ezek. iii. 15).

palace] See on vi. 5.

shall remain after the manner thereof] **shall be inhabited after its fashion**, i.e. it shall be occupied by a king and shall be kept up with all the appliances and state suitable for such a place. Cp. note on "judgement" (same word in the Hebrew) in v. 4.

make merry : and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few ; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be
 20 small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will
 21 punish all that oppress them. And their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them ; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me : for who is he that ¹hath had boldness
 22 to approach unto me ? saith the LORD. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.
 23 ²Behold, the tempest of the LORD, *even his* fury, is gone forth, a ³sweeping tempest : it shall burst upon the head of
 24 the wicked. The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return,

¹ Heb. *hath been surety for his heart.*

² See ch. xxiii. 19, 20.

³ Or, *gathering*

19. *small*] contemptible.

20. *as aforetime*] as in the times of David and Solomon, the golden age of the Jewish kingdom.

congregation] the people collectively, but considered from the ecclesiastical point of view, and thus an expression suggestive of a post-exilic date.

before me] under my care. Cp. Gen. xvii. 18 ; Ps. cii. 28 ; Hos. vi. 2.

21. The Jews shall again be placed under a Prince of their own. This Prince shall draw near to God without a go-between, in other words he shall be Priest as well as King.

their prince] lit. *his* (Jacob's) *mighty one*.

that hath had boldness to approach] rather, as mg. **that hath been surety for his heart to approach**, i.e. no one would venture upon such a step, unless he were fully conscious of authorisation. None but the priests were permitted to enter the Lord's presence, and the Holy of Holies was open but once a year to the high-priest himself. To all others this was a profanity to be punished with death.

23, 24. See introd. summary to this section.

23. This and the following *v.* are nearly identical with xxiii. 19, 20 (see notes there), where judgement is pronounced upon the false prophets. Co. (not so Du.) doubts their genuineness here as well as there, both for metrical reasons, and because the thought they contain is one which has not met us hitherto, viz. a purifying judgement to be executed on recreant Jews (the general reference of "the wicked" in the Hebrew) before the final deliverance.

a sweeping (mg. *gathering*) *tempest*] The sense of the Hebrew word is uncertain. Probably *sweeping* or *rushing* is the meaning intended.

until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it.

At that time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the 31 families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith 2 the LORD, The people which were left of the sword ¹found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, ²when I went to cause him to rest. The LORD appeared ³of old unto me, *saying*, 3 Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore ⁴with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again will I build 4 thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: again shalt

¹ Or, *have found...when I go rest*
³ Or, *from afar*
unto thee

² Or, *when he went to find him*
⁴ Or, *have I continued lovingkindness*

xxx. 1—9. See introd. summary to the section. *V.* 1, virtually a repetition of xxx. 22, should be joined to the previous ch.

1. *all the families of Israel*] the twelve tribes. Afterwards the Northern kingdom is dealt with (2—22), then the Southern (23—26), and then again both together (27—40).

2. *Gi., Du. and Co. agree in considering vv. 1—6 as*, in their main substance, a genuine and early utterance of Jeremiah. The language suggests a date approximately that of ch. iii. Those of the Northern tribes who have survived the slaughter attendant upon their overthrow, and are in the “wilderness” of exile, shall see the LORD, and find favour in His eyes. Their hitherto restless wanderings shall have an end. They shall return to their old home. The verbs are in the “prophetic past.” The prophet describes the reconciliation with Jehovah as already accomplished.

when I went to cause him to rest] or, *mg. when he went to find him rest*; but better than either (as Jehovah appears still to be the speaker), **I will go, that I may cause Israel to rest** (so Dr.).

3. *The LORD appeared of old unto me*] It is best to take this as put in the mouth of the people themselves.

of old] rather, as *mg. from afar*, as the same Hebrew word is rendered ch. xxx. 10. The people from their distant exile in Assyria think upon God as dwelling upon His accustomed seat, Mount Zion.

with lovingkindness have I drawn thee] *mg. have I continued loving-kindness unto thee.* Cp. Ps. xxxvi. 10 and *mg. of cix. 12.* But, considering the strong influence of Hosea on Jeremiah, it is perhaps best to retain “have I drawn” (or *I draw*). Cp. the parallel in Hos. xi. 4.

4. *will I build thee, and thou shalt be built*] For build = make to prosper, see note on xii. 16.

O virgin of Israel] The nation is addressed under the figure of a woman, as so often.

thou be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the
 5 dances of them that make merry. Again shalt thou plant
 vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters
 6 shall plant, and shall ¹enjoy *the fruit thereof*. For there
 shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim
 shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD
 7 our God. For thus saith the LORD, Sing with gladness for
 Jacob, and shout ²for the chief of the nations: publish ye,
 praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of

¹ Heb. *profane*, or, *make common*. See Lev. xix. 23—25; Deut. xx. 6, xxviii. 30. ² Or, *at the head*

tabrets] The tabret or timbrel, the Heb. *tôph*, the *duff* or *diff* of the Arabs, is a hoop on which pieces of brass are often fixed, and over which parchment is extended. It is thus played with the fingers like our tambourine. It was used in early times by the Syrians of Paddan-aram (Gen. xxxi. 27), played principally by women (Ex. xv. 20; Jud. xi. 34; 1 Sam. xviii. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 25), but also by prophets (1 Sam. x. 5) and by others (2 Sam. vi. 5; 1 Chr. xiii. 8). Peake refers for the place occupied by dancing in the religion of the later (post-exilic) period to an essay by Franz Delitzsch, *Iris*, pp. 189, 204.

5. *shalt thou plant vineyards, etc.*] As for several years these would yield no fruit of value, the words imply a return of settled prosperity.

Samaria] A post-exilic writer would not have mentioned Jerusalem's rival in such a connexion.

shall enjoy] mg. Heb. *profane*, or, *make common*. The fruit borne by a tree for the first three years was not to be gathered, that of the fourth year was to be consecrated to God, while that of the fifth year the owner might eat. See Lev. xix. 23—25; Deut. xx. 6, xxviii. 30. The word which in Deut. ("used," "use") expresses the handing over of the fruit to the owner's use is that here rendered "enjoy."

6. *watchmen*] giving signals for the pilgrimage.

let us go up to Zion] for the schism between the Northern and Southern tribes is at an end.

7—15. These *vv.* are probably on the whole post-exilic, having close affinities with 2 Isaiah.

7. *for the chief*] i.e. Israel; cp. Am. vi. 1; or, as mg. *at the head*, i.e. as leader of the nations thus set free. But it is perhaps best (so Du.) to read *on the top of the mountains* (for "nations"), as suggested by the mention of them in *vv.* 5, 6. Cp. Is. xlii. 11.

O LORD, save thy people] LXX and Targ. read, *The LORD hath saved his people*. If we adopt that reading, we must understand the verb as the prophetic perfect (hath determined to save). The actual event is still future in *v.* 8.

Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, 8 and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall they return hither. They shall come with weeping, 9 and with supplications will I lead them: I will 'cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it 10 in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the LORD hath ransomed Jacob, and redeemed him 11 from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they 12 shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD, to the corn, and to

¹ Or, *bring them unto*

8. The Lord's reply to the joyous acclamation. Cp. Is. xlii. 16 and xl. 11.

the blind and the lame, etc.] None shall be omitted. Even those who would naturally have most difficulty in travelling shall return. *hither*] to Palestine, where the prophet is now writing.

9. *with weeping*] tears of contrition, cp. iii. 21. But LXX, "They went forth with weeping, but with consolation will I bring them back," though giving quite a different turn to the passage, may well be correct. As Peake points out, the LXX are supported by the great prominence given in 2 Isaiah to the comforting of Israel.

by rivers] *to rivers*. Neither thirst nor roughness of the road shall trouble them as they traverse the desert homewards. Cp. Is. xli. 18, xliii. 19 f., xlviii. 21, xlix. 10; so Is. xl. 4 (mg.), xlii. 16. Cp. also Is. xxxv.

Ephraim is my firstborn] It is remarkable, if this passage be not Jeremicanic, that Ephraim should be granted by the writer the title of firstborn. But cp. 1 Chr. v. 1—3.

10—14. See introd. summary to the section.

10. For the general sense, and in particular for the term "the isles" (see on xxv. 22), cp. Is. xli. 1, xlii. 10, xlix. 1.

He that scattered Israel will gather him] The nations are instructed that as it was not their doing but God's, that His people had been subject to a foreign yoke, so now their restoration will be His work alone.

12. *shall flow together*] The exact sense is not quite plain. Does it continue the picture which the first clause gives us of the returned tribes assembling in joyful worship on the holy mountain, that they may

the wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; 13 and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. 14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

receive the blessings of a fruitful land, or are they likened to a river which pours down from Zion, so that, their religious service over, they go forth to their several abodes to reap the produce of the field, vineyard, and oliveyard? The use of the word in the parallel passages (ch. li. 44; Is. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1) makes the former interpretation to be perhaps on the whole the better of the two.

goodness] viz. the material blessings that follow.

wine] new wine, must. See *Joel and Amos* (C.B.), p. 179.

sorrow] *pine*, waste away through listlessness and inactivity, such as they had felt when exiles. Cp. the cognate word in Deut. xxviii. 65 ("pining of soul").

13. *the young men and the old, etc.*] For "together" it is best (pointing the MT. differently) to read with LXX "shall rejoice."

14. *satiate*] lit. *water*.

the soul of the priests with fatness] The sacrifices shall be so numerous that the priests and their families shall have more than enough for their share. The priest's portion was the wave-breast and heave-shoulder (Lev. vii. 31—34). For the soul considered as the seat of desire, cp. xxii. 28, and in this case of eagerness for food, appetite, Is. lvi. 11, "greedy dogs," lit. "strong of soul."

15—22. See introd. summary to the section. These striking *vv.* may be confidently considered as stamped with Jeremiah's personality.

15—17. Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, is heard weeping for her lost sons. She is bidden to dry her tears, for there s hope.

15. This *v.* is specially familiar to us through St Matt. (ii. 17 f.), who quotes it after relating the slaughter of the Innocents at Bethlehem. The prophecy is quoted as an illustration or type. The mourning at Ramah is a forecast of that bitter wailing which shall be raised by the mothers of the slaughtered babes. The geographical connexion of Ramah and Bethlehem cannot be maintained, and depends upon a statement which is probably a gloss in Gen. xxxv. 19, xlviii. 7, "Ephrath (the same is Bethlehem)." Ramah is mentioned first in Josh. xviii. 25, between Gibeon and Beeroth, five miles north of Jerusalem, and is very possibly identical with the birth-place, home, and place of burial of Samuel (1 Sam. i. 19, xxv. 1). It was much too far

Thus saith the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah, 15
 lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her
 children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children,
 because they are not. Thus saith the LORD: Refrain thy 16
 voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work
 shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come
 again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for 17
 thy latter end, saith the LORD; and *thy* children shall come
 again to their own border. I have surely heard Ephraim 18
 bemoaning himself *thus*, Thou hast chastised me, and I was
 chastised, as a calf unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me,
 and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God.
 Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that 19
 I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed,
 yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of

from Bethlehem to be in any way *immediately* connected with the subject in illustration of which St Matt. quotes the passage. It was at Ramah that the exiles were assembled before departing for Babylon, as described ch. xl. 1. The appropriateness of calling upon Rachel to weep *in Ramah* consists in this, that her tomb (1 Sam. x. 2 f.) was on the N. border of Benjamin, not far from Bethel which was ten miles N. of Jerusalem, and thus apparently in the neighbourhood of Ramah as well. See the whole question discussed, with views of the probable site, in *Pal. Explor. Fund Quart. Statement*, April 1912, pp. 74 ff. (Clermont-Ganneau and R. A. S. Macalister).

16. *thy work shall be rewarded*] As children have been in thy life and thy death a subject of pain and grief to thee, and as these thy descendants again have grievously perished, so the recompense for all this trouble now arrives, and thou shalt witness the return of the captives.

18. The Lord declares that He has heard Ephraim confessing that his punishment was the just consequence of his sin, and praying for acceptance.

as a calf unaccustomed to the yoke] that has not been tamed.

I shall be turned] rather *I will turn* in the neuter sense (not the passive, which modern English usage implies). See Dr. p. 366.

19. *after that I was turned*] rather (see preceding note), *after I turned*. Ephraim turns, and his repentance is the completion of his conversion. The Heb. text which seems to underlie the LXX rendering, viz. "after my captivity," is hardly to be accepted.

instructed] by punishment. Cp. the use of the word "taught" (the same verb in the Hebrew), Judg. viii. 16.

I smote upon my thigh] in token of contrition. Cp. Ezek. xxi. 12.

the reproach of my youth] the disgrace brought upon me by the sins of my earlier life as a nation.

- 20 my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for as often as I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels ¹are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.
- 21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee guide-posts: set thine heart toward the high way, even the way by which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these
- 22 thy cities. How long wilt thou go hither and thither, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall encompass a man.

¹ Heb. *sound*.

20. God is represented as the speaker. He asks Himself whether Ephraim is still beloved by Him. The answer is contained in the words that follow. As often as He makes mention of him, His affection towards him is stirred. The picture is of course adapted to human modes of thought and feeling, and represents God as acting in the same way in which a man would, when thinking upon the ingratitude and rebellion of a son, whom he nevertheless cannot but continue to love.

pleasant child] lit. *a child of delights, a beloved child*.

as often as I speak against him] or, *as often as I speak of him*.

my bowels are troubled] lit. as mg. *sound*. The meaning is, *my heart yearns*. See on iv. 19.

21. That the travellers should themselves be bidden to set up sign-posts has caused needless trouble to some commentators. Israel is bidden to mark out the way for his return, perhaps by pioneers sent in advance.

guide-posts] The Heb. word occurs here only.

set thine heart] The heart in Heb. denotes the seat of the intellect. Hence the sense is, *turn thy attention* to the way by which thou wentest into exile, that thou mayest retrace thy steps.

22. *How long wilt thou go hither and thither*] How long wilt thou hesitate to return? A sign follows, in order to induce Israel to complete her reconciliation with her offended God.

backsliding] lit. *back-turning*, i.e. recusant, apostate.

the LORD hath created, etc.] No explanation that has been given of the latter part of the *v.* is quite satisfactory. But the sense clearly is that in some way the natural order of things shall be reversed. The best interpretation is perhaps that it shall be the bride that shall court her husband, i.e. "instead of shyly keeping aloof or worse (as hitherto), Israel, Jehovah's bride, shall with eager affection press around her divine husband" (Cheyne). Another explanation is that such is the Lord's condescension towards Israel, that He will for her glory allow the natural order to be reversed, and deign to accept protection (of His

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Yet ²³ again shall they use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall 'bring again their captivity: The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, O mountain of holiness. And Judah and all the cities thereof shall ²⁴ dwell therein together; the husbandmen, and they that go about with flocks. For I have satiated the weary soul, and ²⁵ every sorrowful soul have I replenished. Upon this I ²⁶ awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the ²⁷ house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to ²⁸

¹ Or, *return to*

Temple, services, honour, etc.) at her hands. For this sense of cherishing, protecting, as belonging to the Heb. verb of the clause, we may compare Deut. xxxii. 10, "He (the LORD) *led* him (Israel) *about*, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye"; and Ps. xxxii. 10, "He that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall *compass* him *about*." Some commentators, by a very slight change in the Heb. vocalisation, obtain the rendering, *a woman shall be turned into a man*, i.e. shall be given the courage of a man, so that all fear and hesitation on her part may be at an end.

23—26. See introd. summary to the section. The passage resembles 12—14, and is probably later than Jeremiah's time.

23. The Lord now turns from Israel (Ephraim) to Judah, and in this and the next two verses promises her like blessing. *again*] as was the use in former time.

habitation] homestead; the word rendered "folds" in xxiii. 3, where see note.

mountain of holiness] The expression seems to be used indifferently of the Temple Mountain and of Jerusalem as a whole. See Ps. ii. 6; Is. xi. 9, xxvii. 13, and (especially for Jerusalem) the following: Is. lxvi. 20; Dan. ix. 16; Zech. viii. 3.

24. *they that go about*] opposed to dwellers in fixed habitations, such as the inhabitants of the towns and husbandmen. Cp. Is. xxx. 23.

25. *sorrowful*] *pinning*, virtually the same word as that rendered "sorrow" in v. 12, where see note.

26. Words put in the mouth of the prophet himself, as they are not suitable either to God or to the exiles. The ecstatic state is here called "sleep," and as the prophecy had been of so unusually cheering a character, that sleep might well be called sweet.

27—30. See introd. summary to the section.

27. *I will sow...with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast*] I

pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith the LORD. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make

will make the people and their cattle to prosper and multiply so fast, that the offspring of both shall seem almost to spring from the ground after the manner of seed sown. Cp. Ezek. xxxvi. 9—11.

28. *I have watched over them*] The Heb. verb is the same as that of ch. i. 12, where see note.

to pluck up, etc.] Cp. ch. i. 10, xviii. 7, 9. Thus the later and more cheering part of the message for which Jeremiah was ordained is now being delivered by him.

29, 30. The words "The fathers have eaten, etc." occur also in Ezek. xviii. 2, where they are spoken of as a proverb. The people complain that they are being punished for the sins of an earlier generation (perhaps under Manasseh) and murmuring against God's justice. In the future individual responsibility will be recognised. The earlier view that responsibility for the crime of an individual was as a matter of course shared by all his belongings animate and inanimate alike (see examples in Josh. vii. 24 f.; 1 Sam. xxii. 16—19; 2 Sam. xxi. 1—9), gradually yielded (see 2 Kgs xiv. 5 f.) as the more enlightened conscience revolted against it. Deut. xxiv. 16 marks the change. But Israel in its protest ignores its own sin. As a matter of fact Jeremiah's generation were as much involved in guilt, and that of no trifling kind, as their predecessors. See further on the general subject, Peake, *Problem, etc.* pp. 21 f.

31—34. See introd. summary to the section. These vv. are quoted in Heb. viii. 9—12. Cp. Ezek. xxxvii. 23—27. We have here the announcement of a new covenant which should supersede that made at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, differing from it (i) in permanence, (ii) in the principle by which it should be maintained unbroken. The Law consisted of duties imposed upon the people from without; the spring of action which should produce willing conformity to the new covenant was to be wholly within. Deut. xxx. 6 speaks of the people's hearts being circumcised to love the Lord with all their heart and soul, but here the motive power that belongs to the new dispensation is for the first time made plain. The sense of forgiveness (v. 34) through God's grace shall call out such a spirit of gratitude as shall ensure a willing service, depending on inward not outward motives, based on love, not fear. The new covenant therefore is at once to replace

a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with 32

the old (see Heb. viii. 8—12), but, though new in springs of action, it is to be still the same in substance. Thus the passage forms the climax of Jeremiah's teaching. The religious failure hitherto consisted in gross and repeated acts of disobedience to the outward ordinances imposed on Israel as a national unit. It was necessary in future to get behind ordinances to the source itself of the evil so as to reach the individual heart. If that heart was attuned to the recognition of its relationship to God, all would thenceforth be right. When the inward hostility to the externally imposed law has been changed to a ready conformity, because that law is recognised as no longer an outside matter, but has become part of the individual's own personality, then the Divine and human wills become identified. Religion will now have acquired a title, no longer superficial, to the name national; for each individual will be renewed in heart. Thus "while other prophets did much to interpret religion and to enforce its demands, [Jeremiah] transformed the very conception of religion itself" (Peake, i. 46).

The genuineness of the passage has been doubted or denied by various commentators from Movers onwards, and it is rejected, though very reluctantly, by Du., but on grounds which are shewn by Co. to be quite inconclusive. Du. considers it to be the production of an author of late date, zealous for the faithful observance of legal ordinances, and he denies the spiritual character of the conceptions which the words seem plainly to indicate. But the contrast is a marked one between the external nature of the Sinaitic legislation, and the internal change in the individual's personality, involved in the New Covenant which is to take its place. What was that Sinaitic legislation in Jeremiah's view? Ch. vii. tells us that it was, in a word, the Decalogue (see specially v. 9), written with the finger of God. These precepts are now to be written in men's hearts, and so to ensure an intuitive obedience, "the living pulse-beat of an automatic morality" (Co.).

The very brevity of the utterance (even if we admit the possibility of a slight amount of modification by Baruch or others) supports the acceptance of it as genuine. Its date will naturally be the period of the overthrow of the old *régime* in the destruction of Jerusalem (B.C. 586). Under circumstances such as these the prophet gives utterance to what is surely a sublime triumph of faith, as he raises on the ruins of the old a new and more spiritual structure.

31. *a new covenant*] which in contrast to that ratified at Sinai, and forfeited by the people's repeated disobedience, shall have the essential element of stability and permanence.

and with the house of Judah] In the light of v. 33, where no such clause occurs, this is probably a gloss by a scribe who desired that his own tribe should not be omitted from mention. The omission moreover restores the *Kinah* measure.

their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; ¹which my covenant they brake, although I was ²an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a

¹ Or, *forasmuch as they brake my covenant* ² Or, *lord over them*

32. *in the day*] See on vii. 22.

took them by the hand] with fostering care, as of a father guiding the faltering steps of a young child. Cp. Hos. xi. 1—4.

to bring them...Egypt] omitted by Co., as well as the last three words of the v., so restoring the *Kinah* measure.

which my covenant they brake] mg. *forasmuch as they brake my covenant*. The contrast between “they” and the “I” of the next clause is emphasized in the original.

although I was an husband unto them] mg. *lord over them*. We should, however, changing one Heb. letter, read (supported by LXX and Syr.) *and I abhorred them*. Cp. “and I regarded them not” in Heb. viii. 9. Jehovah’s rejection of them was a gradual process, culminating in the overthrow of the Northern and later of the Southern kingdom.

33. We may compare, in support of Jeremiah’s authorship, ch. iv. 4 (“foreskins of your heart”); also xxiv. 7. Moreover, the post-Jeremianic Is. li. 7 seems to be a reference to this passage.

I will put my law...heart] thus securing that henceforward no complex system of ordinances will be needed. The inner life, emotional and intellectual alike, will be in full harmony with Jehovah’s will.

and I will be...my people] This relationship, existing under the Old Covenant, shall be restored, but with a new and permanent significance.

34. They shall each in the future possess, independent of external teaching, the knowledge of God, implanted by Himself in their hearts. Cp. xxiv. 7, and still more clearly ix. 24; so Is. liv. 13.

35—40. See introd. summary to the section.

35—37. Many hold these vv. to be by a writer of later date than Jeremiah, because (a) the vehemence of their national tone exceeds

light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which ¹stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name: If ³⁶ these ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD: If heaven above ³⁷ can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. Behold, the ³⁸ days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananel unto the gate of the

¹ Or, *stilleth the sea, when &c.* See Is. li. 15.

the prophet's ordinary form of expression, (*b*) they present a good many points of contact with ² Isaiah (Is. xl. 12, 26, xlii. 5, xlv. 24 ff., xlv. 7, 18, liv. 9 f.), (*c*) *v.* 37 at any rate seems to have been a marginal gloss, the LXX placing it before *v.* 35, (*d*) the style is unmetrical, (*e*) they can hardly have been spoken by Jeremiah as his climax to the prophecy of the New Covenant. Obviously, however, they might still be a genuine fragment inserted here from another context. On the whole the case remains doubtful.

35. *stirreth up, etc.*] The converse sense *stilleth* (mg.) although representing a Heb. root identical in consonants with that in the text (found e.g. in l. 34, "give rest") is here indefensible.

36. As soon shall the Divine decrees which regulate the course of nature be dissolved, as Israel be utterly rejected from its status as the people of Jehovah.

38—40. These *vv.* may safely be assumed to belong to post-exilic days, when topographical questions connected with the extent of the city assumed importance. Cp. Zech. xiv. For the position of places here mentioned, see *Quart. Statement of Pal. Explor. Fund*, Jan. 1912, p. 28.

38. *Behold, the days come*] The word *come* is omitted in the earliest form of the Heb. text, but probably by an error in copying, as the phrase is a favourite one with Jeremiah. See note on xxiii. 5.

that the city shall be built] The words which follow no doubt express an enlargement of the bounds of the city, but from our ignorance of the exact position of the places named, we cannot speak more definitely. From the mention made of "the tower of Hananel" in Neh. iii. 1, xii. 39; and of "the corner-gate" in 2 Kgs xiv. 13; 2 Chr. xxvi. 9 (cp. Zech. xiv. 10 for both places) we find that the former was at or near the N.E. and the latter the N.W. corner of the city wall.

to the LORD] for His honour.

39 corner. And the measuring line shall yet go out straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and shall turn about unto
 40 Goah. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

32 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the

39. This *v.*, continuing the description from the N.W. corner, takes the W. side of Jerusalem and promises an extension in that direction also towards the valley of Hinnom southwards.

Gareb] Nothing further is known of this name or of "Goah."

40. *valley of the dead bodies*] the valley of Hinnom, into which carcases of criminals and of animals were cast. It was also defiled as the scene of human sacrifices offered to Molech (vii. 31, xxxii. 35), and to these the "ashes" also seem to refer. So Dr.

the fields] The MT. gives us alternative readings, exhibiting only the slightest difference in spelling, but one of them unknown outside this passage. The other, to be rendered as in E.VV., is in all probability the original one and is found in a kindred context, 2 Kgs xxiii. 4.

the horse gate] mentioned Neh. iii. 28 at the S.E. corner of the Temple courts, 2 Kgs xi. 16 = 2 Chr. xxiii. 15.

This verse makes the same announcement as to the S. side of Jerusalem as the earlier ones had done for the N. and W. sides, viz. that it should in the future enclose spaces now considered unclean.

CH. XXXII. 1—44. JEREMIAH REDEEMS A PIECE OF PROPERTY BELONGING TO HIS FAMILY. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS ACT.

A considerable part of this ch. is believed by most recent commentators to be a later addition to the historical nucleus of the narrative as found in *vv.* 6—15. Thus we may consider the following *vv.* as more or less probably accretions, *vv.* 1—5 (introductory), 17—23 (the earlier part of Jeremiah's prayer), 28—35 (Jehovah's denunciation of the people's idolatry). See the notes on these passages.

The ch. may be summarized as follows. (i) *vv.* 1—5. Introductory account of the circumstances under which the events of the ch. occurred. (ii) *vv.* 6—15. The prophet is invited by his kinsman, Hanamel, to exercise his right as next of kin to buy his field at Anathoth, and

tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. Now at that time ² the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which was in the king of Judah's house. For ³

recognises it as his duty to do so, having already received a Divine communication announcing the object of his kinsman's coming. He executes the purchase with due legal formalities, and charges Baruch to secure the preservation of the deeds; inasmuch as he has Jehovah's promise that, in spite of present circumstances, land tenure shall again become secure. (iii) *vv.* 16—27. The prophet addresses Jehovah, the omnipotent, the merciful, the all-knowing, the Deliverer and Preserver of His people in past times, who now for their disobedience are in imminent danger from the Chaldaeans. Can it be that normal security will ever return? The LORD answers that nothing is too hard for Him. (iv) *vv.* 28—35. The LORD enumerates the people's sins, idolatry and human sacrifices, and declares that the city shall be sacked as requital for its polluting practices. (v) *vv.* 36—44. Nevertheless, the people shall be brought back from Babylon, and enjoy Jehovah's favour, and secure possession of their land.

1—5. Introductory account of the historical position.

1. Jeremiah's own circumstances and those of the State are given first with great particularity in order that it may be brought out that it is in spite of the gloomiest appearances that his faith in the future is thus firm.

the tenth year of Zedekiah] The siege had commenced in his ninth year (xxxix. 1), but the Chaldaeans, hearing that an Egyptian army was approaching, had departed for a time (xxxvii. 5). Jeremiah took advantage of this to leave Jerusalem, in order to visit his property at Anathoth, was charged with falling away to the Chaldaeans, and in spite of his denial was imprisoned (xxxvii. 11—15). The stringency with which he was at first treated was after a while relaxed on his petitioning the king to that effect (xxxvii. 20, xxxviii. 28). He was still, however, "shut up in the court of the guard" (*v.* 2). This part of the narrative therefore is somewhat subsequent in date to those incidents above referred to which are recounted later.

2. *the court of the guard*] not meaning the place where a guard, or body of men, were posted but "a part of the court surrounding the Palace railed off to guard prisoners in, whom it was not desired to throw into the common dungeon" (Dr. *ad loc.*; see also his note p. 367). Cp. Neh. iii. 25, xii. 39.

3—5. These *vv.* form a parenthetical explanation, so that *v.* 6 is to be connected immediately in sense with *v.* 2.

3. *For*] Gi. and Co. supported by LXX render *Where*, to which Du. also inclines. Not so Dr.

Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of
 4 Babylon, and he shall take it; and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes
 5 shall behold his eyes; and he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper?

6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto
 7 me, saying, Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy
 8 it. So Hanamel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself.

4. This *v.* occurs again in almost the same words at ch. xxxiv. 3, where see note.

5. *until I visit him*] The words are in themselves ambiguous and they with the rest of the *v.* are lacking in the LXX.

6—15. See introd. summary to the section.

7. *Hanamel the son of Shallum thine uncle*] The distinct statement in *vv.* 8 and 9 however that Hanamel was Jeremiah's first cousin makes it necessary to refer the word *uncle* of this *v.* to Shallum, and to consider the word for *son* in *v.* 12 to have been accidentally omitted by a Heb. copyist.

Anathoth] See Intr. p. x.

the right of redemption is thine to buy it] According to the law, as formulated in Lev. xxv. 24 f.; Ruth iv. 6, if land was, or was about to be, sold, the nearest of kin, in this case Jeremiah, had a right to purchase or re-purchase it as the case might be, so that it should not pass from one family to another. For the system of land tenure (although it is doubtful whether the laws regulating it were ever reduced to practice) see HDB. iv. 325 a.

8. *which... Benjamin*] absent from LXX and under the circumstances obviously a superfluity.

the right of inheritance is thine] We infer that Hanamel had no children.

Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. And 9
 I bought the field that was in Anathoth of Hanamel mine
 uncle's son, and weighed him the money, even seventeen
 shekels of silver. And I subscribed the deed, and sealed it, 10
 and called witnesses, and weighed him the money in the
 balances. So I took the deed of the purchase, both that 11
 which was sealed, ¹*according to the law and custom*, and
 that which was open: and I delivered the deed of the 12
 purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of
 Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel mine uncle's son,

¹ Or, containing *the terms and conditions*

9. *that was in Anathoth*] Omit with LXX.
weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver] The shekel
 weighed about 220 of our grains. The amount may appear small
 (about £2. 6s. 6d. of our money), but we do not know the size of the
 field. It is clear from the aim of the whole transaction that it was
 a fair price in ordinary times. We must remember also that in those
 days the purchasing power of silver was much greater. Araunah's
 threshing floor, oxen, and implements were bought at a time of great
 prosperity for fifty shekels (2 Sam. xxiv. 24).

10. *And I subscribed the deed*] The following will explain the
 particulars of Jeremiah's action as given here and in the next vv.
 "Contracts stamped upon clay tablets have been found in Babylonia,
 enclosed in an envelope of clay, on the outside of which an exact
 duplicate of the contract was impressed (see an illustration in Maspero,
The Dawn of Civilization, p. 732): if in course of time any disagree-
 ment arose, and it was suspected that the outside text had been tampered
 with, the envelope was broken in the presence of witnesses to see if
 the inside text agreed with it or not. Earthen jars containing such
 duplicate contracts have been excavated at Nippur (Peters, *Nippur*, II.
 198)." Dr. *ad loc.* See further in Johns, *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws*,
Contracts, and Letters, pp. 10 f.

sealed it] not in our sense of adding a seal to a signature ("under
 one's hand and seal"), but sealed up, closed securely.

11. *both that which was sealed...and that which was open*] but not
 implying two documents to be kept separate. They were the two parts
 of a whole. See on v. 10.

according to the law and custom] better, with mg. containing *the*
terms and conditions. The former Dr. however renders *the injunction*,
 viz. to the seller, bidding him hand over the property, while the latter
 are the conditions on which it is purchased.

12. *Baruch*] the first mention of the prophet's faithful amanuensis.
mine uncle's son] See on v. 7. From this v. together with ch. li.

and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the deed of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the
 13 court of the guard. And I charged Baruch before them,
 14 saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase, both that which is sealed, and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days.
 15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land.
 16 Now after I had delivered the deed of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying,
 17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and by thy stretched out arm;

59 we gather that Seraiah, chief chamberlain to Zedekiah, was Baruch's brother.

in the court of the guard] See on v. 2.

15. "It is not the only time in the history of States and Churches that he who has been denounced as a deserter and traitor [see note on *the tenth year of Zedekiah*, v. 1] becomes in the last extremity the best comforter and counsellor. Demosthenes, who had warned his fellow countrymen in his earlier days against their excessive confidence, in his later days was the only man who could reassure their excessive despondency." Stanley's *J. Ch.* II. 465.

For an illustration of the above transaction from Roman history see Intr. p. xviii.

16—27. See introd. summary to the section.

16. *I prayed unto the LORD*] Jeremiah still felt a difficulty in reconciling the obvious import of the transaction which he had just carried out at the Lord's command with that overthrow which at the command of the same Lord he had so frequently announced to the guilty city. This difficulty he expresses in vv. 24 f. which (against Du.), unlike the earlier portion of the invocation, are in all probability genuine. Vv. 17—23 (see introd. notes) (a) are to a large extent made up of expressions found elsewhere in this Book and in Deut., (b) bear a marked resemblance to Neh. ix. 5—38, and (c) in their elaboration are quite out of proportion to the brevity of the prayer that succeeds them. The passage, however, is in itself a fine composition, setting forth in order Jehovah's attributes in general (vv. 17—19), His dealings with His people in particular (vv. 20—22), and Israel's sinfulness and its penalty (v. 23).

17. *thy stretched out arm*] Here, as in xxvii. 5, referring to creation. Elsewhere the expression has to do with Jehovah's acts of deliverance

there is nothing too ¹hard for thee: which shewest mercy 18
unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers
into the bosom of their children after them: the great, the
mighty God, the LORD of hosts is his name: great in 19
counsel, and mighty in work: whose eyes are open upon all
the ways of the sons of men; to give every one according
to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: which 20
didst set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto
this day, ²both in Israel and among *other* men; and madest
thee a name, as at this day; and didst bring forth thy 21
people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with
wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out
arm, and with great terror; and gavest them this land, which 22
thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing
with milk and honey; and they came in, and possessed it; 23
but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law;
they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them
to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon
them: behold the mounts, they are come unto the city to 24
take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans

¹ Or, *wonderful*

² Or, *and*

(e.g. v. 21; Ex. vi. 6; Deut. iv. 34). Cp. the similar phrase used of punishment in Jer. xxi. 5.

hard] lit. as mg. *wonderful*. Cp. Gen. xviii. 14.

18. *recompensest the iniquity of the fathers*] an allusion to the Decalogue (Ex. xx. 5; Deut. v. 9). See on xxxi. 29.

into the bosom] The Eastern garment formed at the bosom numerous folds, which served as a pocket. Cp. Ruth iii. 15; Prov. xvii. 23, and for the phrase itself Ps. lxxix. 12; Is. lxxv. 6.

20. *which didst set*] Cp. Deut. vi. 22; Neh. ix. 10.

even unto this day] a difficult expression. Perhaps we should understand before these words, *and hast continued them* (signs and wonders).

21. Almost the same as Deut. xxvi. 8. For the terror caused to neighbouring nations by the miracles attendant upon the Exodus cp. Ex. xv. 14; Deut. ii. 25, iv. 34.

22. *a land flowing with milk and honey*] See xi. 5, and for the whole v. cp. Neh. ix. 22—35.

24. *the mounts*] See on ch. vi. 6.

are come unto the city] The enemy have pushed them forward so that they already reach to the walls.

is given] The thing is virtually done, there being a complete blockade, and no hope of rescue for the starving population within.

that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken
 25 is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and call witnesses; whereas the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,
 27 Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?

28 Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of
 29 Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it: and the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and set this city on fire, and burn it, with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger.
 30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done that which was evil in my sight from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger
 31 with the work of their hands, saith the LORD. For this city hath been to me a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day; that

25. The two things, the state of the city and God's command, are placed side by side that their apparent inconsistency may be most strikingly shewn.

26—35. See introd. summary to the section. The *vv.* after 27, purporting to give the LORD's reply to Jeremiah's question as to the fitness of his action in purchasing the field, bear fully the marks of a later addition. Their substance indeed is quite in harmony with other prophecies in the Book, and they consist to a large extent of Jeremican expressions. On the other hand, they are quite unnatural in this context. See further in note on *vv.* 36—44.

28. *thus saith the LORD*] A formula only suitable to introduce an utterance by the prophet himself is here assigned to the Divine speaker.

30. *from their youth*] from their earliest times; cp. Hos. xi. 1. In ii. 2 the Exodus time is spoken of as the youth of Israel.

for the children...the LORD] omitted in LXX and probably a gloss, for otherwise why should its reference, in spite of the preceding clause, be confined to the Northern tribes? "Israel" can hardly be used in the wide and restricted senses in the same *v.*

31. *from the day that they built it*] a somewhat loose expression (as

I should remove it from before my face : because of all the 32
 evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah,
 which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their
 kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and
 the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And 33
 they have turned unto me the back, and not the face : and
 though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them,
 yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But 34
 they set their abominations in the house which is called by
 my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of 35
 Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause
 their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto
 Molech ; which I commanded them not, neither came it
 into my ¹mind, that they should do this abomination ; to
 cause Judah to sin.

¹ Heb. *heart*.

it existed in Canaanitish times ; see 2 Sam. v. 6 ff.) for its earliest days as an Israelitish city.

32, 33. These *vv.* are akin to ii. 26 f., vii. 13, 25, xi. 17, xxv. 3 f.

33. *though I taught them, etc.*] This verb and the two participles following are infinitives in the Heb. (as in ch. vii. 9, where see note), and *there was a teaching of them, etc.*

34, 35. See on vii. 30, 31, in the main identical with these *vv.* In addition it is to be remarked that here Baal and Molech are identified. Molech is probably only a variant or distortion of the word *melech*, *king*, in order to express contempt or abhorrence by giving to the consonants the vowels of *bosheth*, *shame* (cp. Ishbosheth, 2 Sam. ii. 8, for Eshbaal, 1 Chr. viii. 33). Apparently this title of king "was in use among the Phoenicians and especially at Byblus ; and Philo of Byblus writes of the god of his city, whom he calls Cronus, that he sacrificed his own son. Of this deity Diodorus says, 'The Carthaginians had a brasen statue of Cronus, with hands extended upwards, but with the palms bent downwards towards the earth, so that the child who was laid upon them rolled into a pit of fire below.' Now since Cronus was a god of the Underworld where 'no rays of the sun penetrated and no wind blew' (Homer, *Iliad* viii. 479 ff.), i.e. was a god of the Dead, it is quite probable that the deity whom the Semites called Melech was also a god of the Shades. Such a god would naturally be supposed to have the desire of peopling his realm, and human sacrifices would seem to be acceptable to him. Thus Melech seems to be the designation of a deity like the Babylonian *Nergal* (2 Kgs xvii. 30), the god of pestilence, war, and the country of the dead." Barnes on 1 Kgs xi. 5 C. B.

36 And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the
 37 famine, and by the pestilence: Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell
 38 safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever; for the good of them, and
 40 of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away ¹from them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts,
 41 that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land ²assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole
 42 soul. For thus saith the LORD: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them
 43 all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the
 44 Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe

¹ Heb. *from after them*.

² Heb. *in truth*.

36—44. See introd. summary to the section. There seems much more to be said for the genuineness of this group of *vv.* in the main than for that of the previous one, though here too (see note introducing the section) there is far from a general acceptance of them by commentators. They have comparatively little in common with other passages as regards phraseology, and they are more relevant to the question which Jeremiah had asked (*vv.* 24 f.). *V.* 37 (which speaks as though a general dispersion had already taken place) and *v.* 43 (referring to the land as already desolate) are perhaps the least defensible parts of the subsection.

36. *thus saith the LORD*] See on *v.* 27.

ye say] better, with LXX, *thou* (Jeremiah) *sayest*, referring to his words in *v.* 24. The MT. may have arisen from the influence of xxxiii. 10.

39. *that they may fear me for ever...after them*] The words seem suggested by those of Deut. iv. 10, vi. 24.

40. *that they shall not depart*] better, **that it turn not away**.

41. *I will plant them*] See on xxiv. 6.

the deeds, and seal them, and call witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the hill country, and in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South : for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the 33 second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the guard, saying, Thus saith the LORD that doeth it, the LORD 2

44. *in the land of Benjamin, etc.*] See on xvii. 26.

CH. XXXIII. 1—26. RENEWED PROMISE OF RETURN AND OF HONOUR AMONG THE NATIONS.

For the late character of *vv.* 14—26 of this ch. see introd. note there. *Vv.* 1—13 are also rejected by Schmidt, Co. and Du., while Gi. admits that they include a certain amount of interpolation, e.g. *vv.* 2, 3. The case against the earlier portion of the ch. seems far from proven, though *vv.* 1—13 probably contain a considerable amount of editorial addition. The latter part of *v.* 1 suggests for the Jeremican portion the same date as ch. xxxii.

The contents may be summarized as follows. (i) *vv.* 1—3. Jehovah invites the prophet to call upon Him for teaching as to His secret purposes. (ii) *vv.* 4—9. Resistance to the Chaldeans will involve fruitless bloodshed ; but afterwards there shall come to Judah and Israel healing and restoration from exile. Jerusalem shall be honoured of all nations, who shall be smitten with dismay when they behold Jehovah's mercy towards her. (iii) *vv.* 10—13. The cities and land that are now desolate shall once more flourish and abound in the joys of life, while flocks shall pasture without fear as in former time. (iv) *vv.* 14—18. A righteous Ruler shall spring up in David's line. Jerusalem shall be named "The LORD is our righteousness." The permanence of the kingly and priestly line shall be securely established. (v) *vv.* 19—26. The order of nature shall not be more fixed than the continuity of king and priests. The seed of David and the ministering Levites shall be as the stars or the sand for multitude. So far is Jehovah from rejecting His people that He will deliver and cherish them as certainly as day and night alternate in due succession by His ordinance.

1. *in the court of the guard*] See on ch. xxxii. 2.

2, 3. These *vv.* bear a close affinity to several passages in 2 Isaiah (e.g. xlv. 18, xlviii. 6), and are probably an insertion by a later hand. For the indefinite "that doeth it," etc., which in the Hebrew still more than the English resembles Is. xxii. 11 (cp. *vv.* 4 f. here with Is. xxii. 10), we should probably read with LXX "who made the earth and formed it to establish it." Cp. Is. xlv. 18.

3 that formeth it to establish it; the LORD is his name: Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and will shew thee great 4 things, and ¹difficult, which thou knowest not. For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are broken down to *make a defence* against the mounts, 5 and against the sword: They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city. 6 Behold, I will bring it ²health and cure, and I will cure them; and I will reveal unto them abundance of peace and 7 truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the

¹ Heb. *fenced in*.

² Or, *healing*

2. *the LORD is his name*] He is God and not man, and so is unchangeable and omnipotent. A similar expression is frequent in Isaiah (xlvi. 4, xlviii. 2, etc.). Cp. Jer. x. 16, in connexion, as here, with Jehovah as Creator ("former") of all things.

3. *great things, and difficult*] mg. Heb. *fenced in*. The word means lit. *cut off*, inaccessible. But certain MSS. of MT., not apparently supported, however, by LXX, read probably rightly (differing only by one letter, *nětsúroth* for *bětsúroth*) *hidden*, as in Is. xlviii. 6.

4—9. See introd. summary to section.

4, 5. These *vv.*, as they stand, are evidently corrupt; for "they" (seeing that the word cannot, as strict grammar demands, mean "the houses"), as applied to the defenders of the city, would require the verb *go out* instead of "come." There is something like an agreement among commentators that "the Chaldeans" were originally the subject, not the object, in *v.* 5. Thus the general sense is given in Co.'s emendation of the passage, viz. "which are broken down, against which the Chaldeans come with mounds and swords to fight and to fill them with the dead bodies, etc."

4. *mounts*] See on vi. 6.

5. *have hid my face*] in displeasure. Cp. Deut. xxxi. 17 and elsewhere.

6. *health*] mg. *healing*; lit. *fresh flesh*; see on viii. 22.

abundance] The word in MT. occurs here only, the meaning that the corresponding root bears in Ezek. xxxv. 13; Prov. xxvii. 6, being taken to justify the sense assigned here. But the text is probably corrupt. A word almost identical in consonants denotes *treasures*, and so is very apposite here as a conjectural emendation (so Du.).

truth] (God's) faithfulness.

captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, 8 whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And *this* 9 *city* shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it. Thus saith the LORD: Yet again there shall be heard in 10 this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, the voice of joy and the voice 11 of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and of them* that bring *sacrifices of* thanksgiving into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captivity of the land to return as at the first, saith the LORD. Thus 12 saith the LORD of hosts: Yet again shall there be in this place, which is waste, without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down. In the cities of the hill country, in 13

7. *as at the first*] as in former times (those of the undivided kingdom).

8. *And I will cleanse them*] This feature of the new covenant has been brought out strongly in xxxi. 34. We have it again, l. 20.

9. *shall fear and tremble*] inferring that He who so honours those who seek Him will punish with equal emphasis those who disregard Him.

10-13. See introd. summary to the section. The genuineness of these *vv.* may be regarded as questionable; although the fact that the overthrow of Jerusalem is a thing of the past and the land is waste does not prove it to be non-Jeremianic, as the prophet survived the final disaster. The form of the doxology (*v.* 11), we may note, differs distinctly from that of post-exilic times.

11. *Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for his mercy endureth for ever*] liturgical forms used in the Temple services. See 1 Chr. xvi. 34; 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3, 6; Ezra iii. 11; Ps. cvi. 1. *sacrifices of thanksgiving*] See on xvii. 26.

I will cause the captivity of the land to return] See note on xxxii. 44.

the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks again pass under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD.

14 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning
15 the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause a ¹Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute
16 judgement and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is *the name* whereby she shall be called, ²The LORD is
17 our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD: ³David shall

¹ See ch. xxiii. 5.

² See ch. xxiii. 6.

³ Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

13. *him that telleth*] For “tell” in the sense (now archaic) of *count* cp. Gen. xv. 5; Ps. xxii. 17, xlviii. 12.

“While one with moderate haste might *tell* a hundred.”

Hamlet, I. 2.

The cognate substantive is preserved to us in the title of the “tellers” who report the result of a division in the House of Commons. For *tale* in the Bible in the sense of *number* see Exod. v. 8, 18; 1 Sam. xviii. 27; 1 Chron. ix. 28.—*Bible Word Book*.

14—26. See introd. summary to the section. This portion of the ch. is clearly later than Jeremiah’s time. The expression “Levitical priests” (see on v. 18) is not one which he uses elsewhere. Moreover, there is a considerable amount of repetition in the passage (cp. vv. 14—16 with xxix. 10, xxiii. 5 f., and v. 17 with xxxv. 19, and vv. 20—26 with xxxi. 35 f.). Above all, it is lacking in the LXX. It is very improbable that those translators would have designedly omitted such a proclamation of the Messianic hope, of the permanence of David’s line, and of the importance of the priestly office. The generally hopeful character of the passage also would have appealed to them. Gi., though deciding against the genuineness of the passage, considers that the phrase “Levitical priests” is so suitable to Jeremiah’s time, that here it must be considered as an archaism employed by a later writer. Co. summarily rejects the passage, and substitutes xxiii. 7 f., as being most appropriate here, while at least suspicious in xxiii. in view of its varying position in MT. and LXX.

14—18. The Kingly and Priestly Offices shall be re-established.

15, 16. See notes on xxiii. 5 f. For the name applied (v. 6) not to the king but to the city cp. Ezek. xlviii. 35.

17. *David...man*] lit. as mg. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man 18 before me to offer burnt offerings, and to burn ¹oblations, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of the LORD 19 came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD: If ye 20 can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David 21 my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As 22 the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the 23 word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest 24 thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the LORD: If my 25 covenant of day and night *stand* not, if I have not appointed

¹ Or, *meal offerings*

18. The making of the Levites co-extensive with the priests, while in consonance with the Deuteronomic legislation (e.g. Deut. xvii. 9, 18), was no longer recognised in Nehemiah's day. Probably this passage was written after the change had in effect taken place, while yet the earlier phrase was retained.

19—22. God's Covenant is as certain in its working as the ordinances of nature. Cp. Ps. lxxxix. 34 ff.

21. See 2 Sam. vii. 12—16.

23—26. Renewal of the assurance to the people as a whole, with the same illustration.

24. *this people*] If the words be right, they must indicate the sceptical part of the nation. But the subsequent context, as it stands, rather requires the meaning to be hostile nations. The emendation which makes the best sense is that of Du. and Co.: "He hath cast them off and rejected His people, that they should be no more a nation before Him."

The two families] Israel and Judah, as shewn by v. 26.

25. *stand*] The absence of a verb in this clause to balance "have...appointed" in the next has led to Du.'s emendation, adopted also by Co., to read by a very slight change in the Hebrew for "If my covenant," *If I have not created*. The alteration to the present text might have easily been made by a scribe who was influenced by "my covenant" of v. 20.

26 the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will ¹cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them.

34 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth that were under his dominion, and all the peoples, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying: Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Go, and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and

¹ Or, *return to their captivity*

CH. XXXIV. 1—22. INCIDENTS IN CONNEXION WITH THE SIEGE.

1—7. Prophecy of the burning of the city and the captivity of Zedekiah.

1. The narrative portion of the work which we may ascribe to Baruch here recommences after a partial suspension. As Jeremiah was still at liberty (v. 6), his utterance must have preceded the temporary raising of the siege owing to the threatened approach of the Egyptian army (see on xxxii. 1).

This subsection may be summarized as follows. (i) vv. 1—3. Jeremiah is bidden to tell Zedekiah that the result of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion now taking place will be that the city shall be burned, and the king taken captive to Babylon. (ii) vv. 4—7. Zedekiah shall however die in peace with the customary funeral rites and mourning. At the time when Jeremiah spoke thus, two cities only besides the capital remained untaken.

Nebuchadnezzar...and all the peoples] The LXX reading is briefer, omitting "the kingdoms of...and all the peoples," and probably gives the original form of the v.

3. *thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon*] Cp. xxxii. 4. There is no reason to doubt, with Du., that the blinding of Zedekiah, as related in lii. 11; 2 Kgs xxv. 7, after his interview with

thou shalt go to Babylon. Yet hear the word of the LORD, 4 O Zedekiah king of Judah : thus saith the LORD concerning thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword ; thou shalt die in 5 peace ; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they ¹make a burning for thee ; and they shall lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord ! for I have spoken the word, saith the LORD. Then Jeremiah 6 the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, when the king of Babylon's army 7 fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and against Azekah ; for these *alone* remained of the cities of Judah *as* fenced cities.

The word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, 8

¹ See 2 Chr. xvi. 14, xxi. 19.

Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (xxxix. 6 f.), is historical. See Ezek. xii. 13.

4, 5. Du. challenges the statement in these *vv.* as not in consonance with the troublous ending of Zedekiah's life in exile. If the text be sound, "in peace" can only mean a natural death, as opposed to one by violence or by the executioner's sword. But there is likelihood in Co.'s view that some words may have fallen out, and that the utterance ("Yet hear, etc.") was conditional on the king's timely submission to Babylon.

5. *shall they make a burning*] Apparently some honorific burning of spices as an accompaniment of burial. See 2 Chr. xvi. 14, xxi. 19. *Ah lord !*] See on xxii. 18.

7. *all...that were left*] The LXX give some support to the probability that this part of the *v.* is an interpolation, seeing that "all" resolves itself into two only.

Lachish] now *Tell el-Hesi*, about 35 miles S.W. of Jerusalem. *Azekah* has not been identified, but it was probably about 15 miles S.W. of Jerusalem. See Josh. xv. 35 ; 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

8—22. CONDEMNATION OF THE PERJURY INVOLVED IN THE TREATMENT OF THE HEBREW SLAVES.

The subsection may be summarized as follows. (i) *vv.* 8—11. Zedekiah induces the people solemnly to bind themselves to release their slaves. They do so, but presently cancel their agreement. (ii) *vv.* 12—16. Jeremiah is bidden to remind the people of the terms of the Law on the subject, and to charge them with perjury in the violation of the

after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty
 9 unto them; that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of
 10 them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother: and all the princes and all the people obeyed, which had entered into the covenant, that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of
 11 them any more; they obeyed, and let them go: but afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids:

covenant they had recently made under solemn sanctions. (iii) *vv.* 17—22. They shall in consequence fall victims to the sword. Their bodies after death shall suffer indignities. The king and his princes shall be taken captive, Jerusalem captured and burnt, and the cities laid waste.

8. *had made a covenant*] According to Exod. xxi. 2 [E] a Hebrew male slave was to be set free after six years' service, and by Deut. xv. 12 this was extended to female slaves. The conscience-quicken-
 ing power of impending danger, in meeting which the slaves, if enfranchised, would be more ready to co-operate with their former masters, seems to have induced Zedekiah, naturally too weak-minded a man to have displayed much vigour in urging any such conduct upon his subjects, to make the agreement with them here spoken of. This view of the motive is to be preferred to Du.'s theory that the slaves were turned out of the city during the siege because of the burden of feeding persons whose normal occupation of tillage, etc. was necessarily in abeyance. The narrative on the contrary implies that the action was to the slaves' advantage (see *v.* 16), and that it was from motives of selfishness that the edict, though sanctioned by the solemnity of an oath, was cancelled on the temporary withdrawal of the besiegers to meet the approaching army of Pharaoh (*v.* 21).

to proclaim liberty unto them] The same phrase is used of the proclamation made in the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 10). "Unto them," if it be not an insertion, refers to the slaves.

9. *serve himself of them*] The poverty, arising out of the devastation wrought by repeated wars, must have brought about a large amount of servitude, as was the case e.g. in later times. See Neh. v. 5, and on xxx. 8.

10, 11. The MT. is somewhat awkward, and the LXX (preferred by Co. and Du.) clearer and briefer. But we cannot accept the latter with entire confidence.

therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from ¹² the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: ¹³ I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of ¹bondage, saying, At the end of seven years ye ¹⁴ shall let go every man his brother that is an Hebrew, which ²hath been sold unto thee, and hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. And ye ¹⁵ were now turned, and had done that which is right in mine eyes, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: but ye turned and profaned my ¹⁶ name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had let go free at their pleasure, to return; and ye brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore thus saith ¹⁷ the LORD: Ye have not hearkened unto me, to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be ³tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give ¹⁸

¹ Heb. *bondmen*.² Or, *hath sold himself*³ Or, *a terror unto*

12—16. See introd. summary to the subsection.

14. *At the end of seven years*] As we should say of *six* (so LXX) years. In Hebrew counting of this kind both the first and the last items were reckoned in. So the jubilee was in strictness the forty-ninth (the seventh Sabbatical) not the fiftieth year. Compare the rite of circumcision administered on the eighth (seventh) day after birth, and our Lord's Resurrection on "the third (second) day." The words are quoted somewhat freely from Deut. xv. 12, rather than from the parallel passage Ex. xxi. 2 ("The Book of the Covenant").

16. *at their pleasure*] lit. *according to their soul*. See on xxii. 27.

17—22. See introd. summary to section.

17. *I proclaim unto you a liberty*] The people, hitherto God's servants, and secure in that service, shall be cast off by Him, and shall accordingly, being no longer under His protection as their Owner, become subject to the perils which follow.

tossed to and fro] better, as mg. *a terror unto*. See on xv. 4.

the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me, ¹when they cut the calf in twain and passed
 19 between the parts thereof; the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of
 20 the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of
 21 the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which
 22 are gone up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.

¹ Heb. *the calf which they cut &c.*

18. *when they cut the calf in twain*] This rendering, which simplifies the construction, is obtained from the literal Heb. as given in mg. by transposing two words of the clause in the original. See Gen. xv. 10 for a ceremony of this kind as attendant upon a covenant. Its significance is probably that "the parties to the covenant are united by being taken within the life of the same sacred victim." Pe., who compares the eating of the same sacrifice by the two parties to a covenant.

CH. XXXV. 1—19. THE INCIDENT OF THE RECHABITES AND ITS APPLICATION.

The settlement of Israel in Canaan, involving as it did the adoption of agricultural pursuits, led to a certain amount of recognition of local deities (Baals) supposed by the Canaanites to bestow the produce in return for appropriate rites. The adoption of such local rites was considered by the majority of the people as quite consistent with the worship of Jehovah as the national God or "Baal," *lord*. In this way the licentious practices connected with the service paid to the local Baals were extended to the worship of Jehovah Himself. Jehu, in his bloodthirsty zeal for the extermination of the Tyrian Baal, Melkart by name, was supported by Jehonadab son of Rechab (2 Kgs x. 15 ff.), whose object in insisting on his followers refusing an agricultural as opposed to a nomadic life was simply to maintain strict loyalty to Jehovah as the wilderness God, and so to abolish all other worship whether imported from without or

The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in 35 the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak 2 unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink. Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of 3 Habazziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; and I brought them into 4 the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was by

otherwise. Thus the significance of his action was solely of a religious character and not a protest against luxury. There is no real reason to doubt (with Schmidt) the historical character of the narrative. It contains details not likely to be invented.

We may summarize the account as follows. (i) *vv. 1—11.* Jeremiah brings the Rechabites into one of the Temple chambers and offers them wine. They decline the offer, on the ground that their ancestor Jonadab had forbidden them any practices inconsistent with a strictly nomadic life. They add that they are now in Jerusalem only for self-preservation. (ii) *vv. 12—19.* The prophet is bidden to point the moral for the people. The Rechabites have held Jonadab's precept binding ever since. Jerusalem and Judah on the contrary have ignored the repeated warnings of Jehovah through His prophets against idolatry and other sins. Therefore punishment shall come on the rebellious people; while the Rechabites shall never want descendants to serve Jehovah.

1. *The word which came...in the days of Jehoiakim]* This and the following chapter form a remarkable break in the narrative of chs. xxxii.—xliv. They at once bring us back from the tenth year of the reign of Zedekiah to the later part of Jehoiakim's reign, when the Babylonian army had entered Palestine and compelled many of its inhabitants to take refuge within Jerusalem. Among these were the Rechabites.

2. *Go unto the house]* The family (so in 3, 5, 18; Gen. vii. 1, etc.) are meant, not the dwelling-houses. See *v. 7*. It was some years after the burning of the Roll (in Jehoiakim's fourth year), and it appears that the prophet could again appear in public without risk (see xxxvi. 19, 26).

of the Rechabites] They were a wandering tribe of Kenite descent (1 Chr. ii. 55) and thus connected with Moses' brother-in-law (Jud. i. 16). Some of that family had settled in the south of Judah (*ib.*), others near Kedesh in Naphtali (Jud. iv. 11). This branch however were nomad.

4. The particularity in description points to the narrative being contemporary with the events it describes.

and I brought them into the house of the LORD] that so what was to follow might be made most prominent and be most widely known.

the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the ¹door: 5 and I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink 6 ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: 7 neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye 8 sojourn. And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our 9 daughters; nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither 10 have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that 11 Jonadab our father commanded us. But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians; so we dwell at Jerusalem.

¹ Heb. *threshold*.

Maaseiah] probably father of the Zephaniah (xxi. 1, xxix. 25, xxxvii. 3) who is mentioned as "second priest" in lii. 24.

keeper of the door] lit. *threshold*. There were three of these officers (lii. 24; 2 Kgs xxv. 18). They seem to have stood next in rank after the high-priest and his deputy (*ib.*), and were charged with the care of the money contributed for the restoration of the Temple (2 Kgs xii. 9).

5. *bowls*] large vessels, from which drinking cups were filled.

7. *neither shall ye build house, etc.*] Cp. the description of the Nabataeans by Diodorus Siculus who says (xix. 94) that they neither sow seed, nor plant fruit-tree, nor use wine, nor build a house. In their case, however, it was not from religious motives, but to avoid risk at the hands of powerful neighbours.

11. *Syrians*] allies of the Chaldaeans at this period. See 2 Kgs xxiv. 2.

12—19. See introd. summary to the section. This portion, which forms the application of the preceding narrative, seems to have received considerable later additions. The LXX seem to present it in practically its original form.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, ¹² Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and ¹³ say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD. The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, ¹⁴ that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed, and unto this day they drink none, for they obey their father's commandment: but I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not hearkened unto me. I have sent also unto you all my servants the ¹⁵ prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. Forasmuch as the sons of Jonadab ¹⁶ the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father which he commanded them, but this people hath not hearkened unto me; therefore thus saith the LORD, ¹⁷ the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered. And ¹⁸ Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and

12. *unto Jeremiah*] LXX, better, *unto me*. It is more natural to retain the 1st person in accordance with the previous context, thus taking the proper name as a gloss.

13. *instruction*] or, *correction*. See on xvii. 23.

17. *the LORD...Israel*] This accumulation of Divine names (abs. from LXX), though it can scarcely be called strange, is without parallel elsewhere.

18. *And Jeremiah said...Rechabites*] The LXX, doubtless rightly, omit these words (see on v. 12), and seem to have preserved the original form, "Therefore thus saith the LORD, Inasmuch as the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have obeyed the commandment of their father to do as their father commanded them," while the MT. has been compelled by the insertion to change the 3rd person into the 2nd.

kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that
 19 he commanded you; therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,
 the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not
 want a man to stand before me for ever.

36 And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the
 son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came unto

19. *to stand before me*] It is by no means necessary to understand the expression here as implying priestly functions (cp. xv. 19), although the hint that the Rechabites were employed in some capacity in connexion with the Temple is supported by (i) the LXX heading of Ps. lxxi.; (ii) the account of the martyrdom of James the Just (Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.* II. 23) where "priests of the sons of Rechab" are spoken of. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish traveller of the 12th century, mentions a body of Jews who were called Rechabites, and whose customs corresponded with those detailed in Jeremiah. Dr Wolff (*Journal*, 1829) describes a body of Rechabites near Mecca who claimed to be sons of Jonadab. But it is by no means clear that the title in these three cases meant anything more than a certain amount of asceticism.

CH. XXXVI. 1—32. JEREMIAH'S ROLL WRITTEN, READ,
 BURNT, AND RE-WRITTEN.

This extremely interesting and important ch., in its bearing on the history of the construction of the Book as it now stands, has been already treated in the Intr. pp. xl. ff.

We may summarize the contents as follows. (i) *vv.* 1—8. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jehovah bids Jeremiah commit to writing in a Roll the substance of his prophecies since the commencement of his ministry, in case the people may thereby be moved to forsake their evil ways. Baruch accordingly takes down the words at the mouth of Jeremiah, and, as the latter is unable himself to appear at the Temple, reads it there at his direction. (ii) *vv.* 9—20. In the ninth month of the next year Baruch reads the Roll publicly in the chamber of Gemariah. Micaiah, his son, reports its substance to the princes, who cause Baruch to come and repeat the reading. They declare thereupon that they will communicate the contents to the king, ascertaining by questions that Jeremiah is the sole author, and they advise that he and his amanuensis go into hiding. (iii) *vv.* 21—26. Jehoiakim sends for the Roll, and on hearing the earlier part of its contents, cuts it in pieces and burns it in the brasier before which he is sitting, in spite of the intercession of some of the princes. Moreover he bids that Jeremiah and Baruch should be seized; but they elude him. (iv) *vv.* 27—32. Jehovah bids the prophet re-write the Roll, adding the punishment that shall be the lot of Jehoiakim personally for his

Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, 2 and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house 3 of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. Then 4 Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book. And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am ¹shut 5 up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: therefore 6

¹ Or, *restrained*

refusal to believe in the calamities which were coming on his people. Jeremiah therefore dictates the new edition of the Roll, including further like prophecies.

Here we have the detailed circumstances under which Jeremiah recorded in a permanent form the substance of those prophecies which he had been uttering against Judah and Jerusalem for twenty-three years (see on xxv. 3). This ch. like the last (see on v. 1 there) forms a break in the historical section (chs. xxxii.—xliv.), and goes back to the time of Jehoïakim.

2. *Take thee a roll of a book*] Several skins were stitched together and attached to a roller of wood at one or both ends. The writing was arranged in columns parallel to the rollers, so that as the parchment was gradually unrolled from one end to the other, the successive columns could be read. Our word *volume* (that which is *rolled up*) points by its derivation to this older form of book.

write therein all the words] The prophet's memory would supply him with the substance at any rate of the prophecies which he had uttered for the twenty-three years of his mission. But we may well believe, from the vivid style in which some of the earlier prophecies have come down to us, that he was able to draw upon some contemporary records of the exact language he had used, occasionally modifying it so as to adapt it to new circumstances.

Israel] Jeremiah addresses the Northern kingdom with *promises* only (iii. 6 ff., xxxi. 2 ff.). Accordingly it is better to read, with considerable support from MSS. of LXX, *Jerusalem*.

3. *It may be that the house of Judah, etc.*] Cp. ch. xxvi. 3.

4. *Then Jeremiah called Baruch*] mentioned already (xxxii. 12 f.) as the prophet's attendant. He was grandson of Maaseiah, "governor of the city" (2 Chr. xxxiv. 8) and brother of Seraiah (li. 59).

5. *I am shut up*] The same verb occurs chs. xxxiii. 1, xxxix. 15,

- go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon ¹the fast day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out
 7 of their cities. It may be ²they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the
 8 LORD hath pronounced against this people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.
- 9 Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that all the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem, proclaimed a fast before
 10 the LORD. Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court,

¹ Or, *a fast day*

² Heb. *their supplication will fall*.

in the sense of *in confinement*. Here, however, it cannot have that force (see *v.* 19), but simply means that he was hindered from addressing the people by ceremonial uncleanness (cp. 1 Sam. xxi. 7, where the Hebrew verb "detained" is the same) or some other cause, perhaps danger to his life arising from the extreme unpopularity of his recent utterances.

6. *the fast day*] mg. *a fast day*, probably one specially appointed on account of the critical position of affairs (*v.* 9).

7. *they will present their supplication*] mg. *their supplication will fall*. The attitude of the petitioners is transferred in thought to the petition. Cp. the phrase in several other places (xxxvii. 20, xxxviii. 26, etc.), and sometimes (xxxvii. 20, xlii. 2) with the further sense, which also seems to belong to it here, of acceptance.

8. *And Baruch...did according to all*] This summary statement of the fact that Baruch carried out Jeremiah's commands is followed by the detailed account in *vv.* 9 f.

9—20. See introd. summary to the chapter.

9. *in the ninth month*] afterwards called Chisleu, our December (see *v.* 22), not therefore the annual solemnity of the seventh month, the only stated fast of the Law (Lev. xvi. 29, xxiii. 27).

10. *Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe*] Shaphan was himself scribe in the days of Josiah (2 Kgs xxii. 3). If this Shaphan be the one mentioned in xxvi. 24, Gemariah was brother of Ahikam, who was

at the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in the ears of all the people. And when Micaiah the son of 11 Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, he went down into the king's 12 house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Micaiah declared unto them all the 13 words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi 14 the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cush, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they said unto him, Sit down now, 15 and read it in our ears. So Baruch read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, 16 they turned in fear one toward another, and said unto friendly to Jeremiah. He is, of course, distinct from the Gemariah mentioned xxix. 3.

upper court] the same as the "inner court" of 1 Kgs vi. 36, vii. 12. See on xx. 2.

new gate] See on xxvi. 10.

11. *when Micaiah...had heard*] As it was in the chamber of Micaiah's father that Baruch had been allowed to read the roll, Gemariah, engaged at the moment at a council of the princes in another room, would naturally be desirous of learning as soon as might be the particulars of what had occurred.

12. *he went down*] See on xxii. 1.

Elnathan the son of Achbor] mentioned ch. xxvi. 22.

14. *Jehudi...the son of Cush*] Although the first of these names also means a Jew, and the second an Ethiopian, it is more probable that both are distinctly proper names here. There may, however, still be a reference to Ethiopian descent in the latter name. We may note that it is quite usual in mentioning persons of comparatively slight distinction to trace their descent back for three generations.

15. *Sit down*] These words taken with v. 19 shew that the princes were favourably disposed towards Baruch and Jeremiah. The same fact has been marked already in ch. xxvi. 16. Baruch took the position ordinarily assumed by an Eastern teacher. Cp. Luke iv. 20.

16. *they turned in fear one toward another*] lit. *they trembled every one to his neighbour*, i.e. they looked at each other and trembled.

Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words.
 17 And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst
 18 thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch
 answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me
 with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book.
 19 Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou
 20 and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be. And
 they went in to the king into the court; but they had laid
 up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they
 21 told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent
 Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of the chamber
 of Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it in the ears of
 the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood
 22 beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in
 the ninth month: and *there was a fire in the brasier burning*

unto Baruch] omit with LXX.

17. *How didst thou write*] They desired to know how far the words might be Baruch's own, so as to be able to state to the king to what extent, if any, the prophet's amanuensis was responsible.

at his mouth] omit with LXX, as a gloss spoiling the sense here, and introduced from v. 17.

19. *Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah*] See on v. 5. The princes doubtless had before their minds the fate of Uriah (xxvi. 23). The so-called "Grotto of Jeremiah" near the "Quarries of Solomon" outside the Damascus Gate has been conjectured, owing to its traditional association with his name, to have been their hiding-place. See *Pal. Explor. F. Quart. Statement*, Jan. 1912, p. 27.

20. *the court*] This would of course be an open place. Cf. v. 22. Read therefore (changing one consonant in MT.) the word which occurs in MT. of 1 Kgs i. 15 ("chamber") and render *cabinet*. (So Gi., Du., Co.)

21—26. See introd. summary to the ch.

22. *in the winter house*] See on v. 9. It was a cold and rainy time of the year (see Ezra x. 9). Amos (iii. 15) mentions both winter and summer houses. "In common parlance the lower apartments are simply *el beit*—the house; the upper is the *ulltyeh*, which is the summer house. Every respectable dwelling has both....If these are on the same storey, then the external and airy apartment is the summer house, and that for winter is the interior and more sheltered room. It is rare to meet a family which has an entirely separate dwelling for summer."—Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 309.

in the ninth month] omit with LXX.

there was a fire in the brasier] Brasiers containing charcoal are

before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read ²³ three or four ¹leaves, that *the king* cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brasier. And ²⁴ they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Moreover Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made ²⁵ intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them. And the king commanded ²⁶ Jerahmeel ²the king's son, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that ²⁷

¹ Or, *columns*

² Or, *the son of Hammelech*

placed in a depression in the middle of a room for purposes of warming. The change of one Hebrew consonant gives us the right sense. As the MT. stands, it is defective and lacking in grammar.

23. *when Jehudi had read*] rather, as Dr. "as often as J. read"; for *v.* 24 implies that the king heard all the contents.

leaves] mg. *columns*, lit. *doors* (see on *v.* 2).

that the king cut it, etc.] In the absence of a nominative to the verb in MT., it seems at least as natural to suppose that, as often as Jehudi had read three or four leaves, the king ordered him to cut them off and burn them. Otherwise we must assume that the king himself had the knife and that he repeatedly took pieces of the Roll from the reader.

penknife] lit. *scribe's knife*, used for making and mending reed pens, cutting up writing materials, etc.

24. *And they were not afraid...neither the king*] Contrast the conduct of the king's father (2 Kgs xxii. 11).

25. *Elnathan...had made intercession*] See note on xxvi. 22.

26. *the king's son*] mg. (less well) *the son of Hammelech*. It probably means simply one of the royal house. So in xxxviii. 6. See A. B. Davidson on Zeph. i. 8 (C.B.).

27—32. See introd. summary to the chapter. Du. and Co. consider that the passage, as it stands, shews traces of a later hand, on the ground that the king is represented as addressing Jeremiah (*v.* 29), though they did not meet. This, however, seems somewhat hypercritical. It is true that *v.* 30 may seem to imply that Jehoiakim would have no son to succeed him, whereas Jehoiachin reigned, though only for three months (2 Kgs xxiv. 8). If this, however, had been the sense attached to the saying when placed here, it probably would not have been inserted, as not being in accordance with the result. "Sit" may

the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch
 28 wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again
 another roll, and write in it all the former words that were
 in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath
 29 burned. And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah thou
 shalt say, Thus saith the LORD: Thou hast burned this roll,
 saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of
 Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and
 30 shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore
 thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah:
 He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and
 his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and
 31 in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his
 seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring
 upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and
 upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced
 32 against them, but they hearkened not. Then took Jeremiah
 another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of
 Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all
 the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had
 burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto
 them many like words.

quite naturally be taken to mean *sit permanently*, Jehoiachin's short reign being ignored.

29. *Why hast thou written, etc.*] a quotation, though not *verbatim*, from xxv. 9 f.

30. *He shall*] See on xxii. 18 f.

32. *and there were added...many like words*] See Intr. ch. iv. § 5.

CH. XXXVII. 1—21. INCIDENTS IN JEREMIAH'S HISTORY CONNECTED WITH THE SIEGE.

For a similar incident to the one described in *vv.* 1—10 see introductory note to ch. xxi.

The ch. may be summarized as follows. (i) *vv.* 1, 2. Explanatory introduction. (ii) *vv.* 3—10. In the face of imminent danger from the Chaldaeans Zedekiah sends to ask for the prayers of Jeremiah, who was not yet imprisoned. The enemy, fearing that the Egyptian army were about to take them in the rear, had raised the siege. The prophet is directed to announce that Pharaoh's army will return to Egypt without rendering aid and that the Chaldaeans will undoubtedly recommence the

And Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned as king, instead ³⁷ of ¹Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. But ² neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.

And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, ³ and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us. Now Jeremiah came in and went out among ⁴ the people: for they had not put him into prison. And ⁵ Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of

¹ See ch. xxii. 24.

investiture of the city, capture it, and destroy it by fire. (iii) *vv.* 11—15. Taking the opportunity of the investing army's absence, Jeremiah is going out of the city on business, when he is arrested on the charge of desertion to the enemy. He denies it, but is disbelieved by the princes, who confine him in a dungeon in the house of Jonathan the scribe. (iv) *vv.* 16—21. After many days' detention the king sends for him secretly to consult him. The prophet tells Zedekiah that he shall be made prisoner by the king of Babylon. He moreover protests against his own imprisonment as unjust, points to the hostile prophets' predictions as falsified by events, and begs to be released from the dungeon. Zedekiah accordingly transfers him to the guard-court, and orders that he be provided with food as long as the siege lasts.

1. *And Zedekiah...reigned as king*] This and *v.* 2 are apparently an editorial note to indicate to the reader that the narrative now no longer relates, as did the last two chs., to the reign of Jehoiakim. The rest of the ch. we may consider to be taken substantially from Baruch's memoirs.

Coniah] See on xxii. 24.

3. *And Zedekiah the king sent*] This mission took place later than that related in ch. xxi. 1, which was sent when Nebuchadnezzar's army was approaching Jerusalem. In this case on the contrary the siege had begun and had been raised, and the hopes of the people were excited in consequence.

Jehucal] In ch. xxxviii. 4 he ("Jucal") proposes that Jeremiah should be put to death.

Zephaniah] See chs. xxi. 1, xxix. 25.

4. *came in and went out*] was still coming in and going out, was still free, had not suffered arrest. That was immediately to follow.

5. *when the Chaldeans...heard tidings of them, they brake up*] We

6 them, they brake up from Jerusalem. Then came the word
 7 of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith
 the LORD, the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the
 king of Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me;
 Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you,
 8 shall return to Egypt into their own land. And the
 Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city; and
 9 they shall take it, and burn it with fire. Thus saith the
 LORD: Deceive not ¹ yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall
 10 surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For
 though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans
 that fight against you, and there remained but ² wounded
 men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his
 tent, and burn this city with fire.

11 And it came to pass that when the army of the Chaldeans
 was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army,
 12 then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into
 the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion ³ there, in the
 13 midst of the people. And when he was in the gate of
 Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose name

¹ Heb. *your souls*. ² Heb. *thrust through*. ³ Heb. *from thence*.

do not know whether the retreat on the part of the Egyptians which followed was due to a defeat from the Chaldaeans, or not. The former is at least suggested by Ezek. xxx. 21. Pharaoh Hophra (called Apries by Herodotus) reigned B.C. 590—571. For his overthrow see ch. xlv. 30.

10. *wounded*] mg. Heb. *thrust through*. Cp. Lam. iv. 9 with note. *every man in his tent*] Co. suggests that these words should be connected with "wounded men," meaning "If there be but one survivor in each tent out of its several occupants." The LXX, however, read *in his place*, i.e. where he lies on the field of battle.

11—15. See introd. summary to ch.

12. *the land of Benjamin*] presumably to Anathoth.
to receive his portion] The Heb. is obscure, but probably his object was in some way connected with his purchase as related ch. xxxii. 9 ff. Other conjectures are, to secure his share in a re-allotment of communal lands, or, to get his portion of the produce of the priests' lands at Anathoth.

13. *the gate of Benjamin*] in the N. wall of the city, mentioned also xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10.

a captain of the ward] lit. *a master of the watch*, a sentinel, charged with the duty of taking cognisance of those who passed the gate.

was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he laid hold on Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, It is ¹⁴ false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans; but he hearkened not to him: so Irijah laid hold on Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. And the princes were wroth with ¹⁵ Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe; for they had made that the prison. When Jeremiah was come into the ¹dungeon house, ¹⁶ and into the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days; then Zedekiah the king sent, and fetched him: and ¹⁷ the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is. He said also, Thou shalt be delivered into the

¹ Or, *house of the pit*

Thou fallest away] The views which Jeremiah was known to hold as to the propriety of yielding to the Chaldaeans (e.g. ch. xxi. 9) would give plausibility to the charge, and of this the princes in their hostility to the policy he advocated would gladly avail themselves to put him under arrest. Evidently there had been a considerable number of such departures (xxxviii. 19; cp. lii. 15); but there was no real inconsistency between Jeremiah's counselling others to withdraw, and his conviction that it was his personal duty to remain in the doomed city.

15. *the princes were wroth with Jeremiah*] These were not the princes who had looked upon the prophet with favour in the reign of Jehoiakim (xxvi. 16, xxxvi. 19). Those were now no doubt exiles, and these their successors, as thoroughly opposed to the Chaldaean rule, and sympathising with their compatriots of Babylon, had no favour to bestow upon Jeremiah. They would remember how he had likened them to evil figs (ch. xxiv.), and had denounced their conduct towards their slaves (ch. xxxiv.).

Jonathan] Shaphan, the scribe of seventeen years before (xxxvi. 10), was now probably dead or among the exiles.

16—21. See introd. summary to ch.

16. *dungeon house*] lit. as mg. *house of the pit*. Cp. xxxviii. 6.

cells] The Heb. word is found here only and seems to denote a room with a vaulted roof.

many days] during which time the Chaldaeans resumed the siege and the danger became so pressing that Zedekiah was induced to send for the prophet, and ask him for some intimation of the future.

17. *asked him secretly*] This shews us that the prophet was as unpopular as ever. It also points to Zedekiah's moral weakness, as dreading the interference of the princes in the matter. Cp. xxxviii. 5, 24 ff.

18 hand of the king of Babylon. Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, Wherein have I sinned against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? Where now are your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land? And now hear, I pray thee, O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee, ¹be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there. Then Zedekiah the king commanded, and they committed Jeremiah into the court of the guard, and they gave him daily a loaf of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

¹ Heb. *fall*.

19. *Where now are your prophets which prophesied unto you*] Jeremiah in this *v.* challenges the whole people through their king ("your ...you"). For the reference to these prophets cp. xxviii. 2—11.

20. *be accepted*] lit. *fall*. See on xxxvi. 7.

21. *court of the guard*] See on xxxii. 2.

a loaf of bread] a flat round cake, not unlike a flat stone in shape and appearance (Matt. vii. 9, cp. iv. 3), about nine inches in diameter and an inch thick. One of these cakes was considered a charity dole (1 Sam. ii. 36, R.V. "loaf").

the bakers' street] Hos. vii. 4, 6 shews that baking was a trade. We here see that, like other trades in the East, the bakers occupied a definite place in the bazaar.

until all the bread in the city was spent] Cp. ch. lii. 6.

CH. XXXVIII. 1—13. FURTHER INCIDENTS IN JEREMIAH'S HISTORY CONNECTED WITH THE SIEGE.

This section may be summarized as follows.

(i) *vv.* 1—6. Four of the princes, in view of Jeremiah's declarations that those who remained in the city should perish, while those who went forth should live, demand of the king that the prophet should be put to death as discouraging the defenders and as disloyal to his nation. Zedekiah declares himself unable to resist them, and Jeremiah is consigned to a miry dungeon. (ii) *vv.* 7—13. Ebed-melech points out to the king that Jeremiah is in danger of starvation owing to the scarcity of provisions. Zedekiah accordingly bids that he be drawn up from the dungeon. This is done, and he is placed again in the guard-court.

And Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the 38
 son of Pashhur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and
 Pashhur the son of Malchijah, heard the words that
 Jeremiah spake unto all the people, saying, Thus saith the 2
 LORD, He that abideth in this city shall die by the
 sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that
 goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, and his life shall
 be unto him for a prey, and he shall live. Thus saith 3
 the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand
 of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it.
 Then the princes said unto the king, Let this man, we 4
 pray thee, be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth
 the hands of the men of war that remain in this city,
 and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words
 unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this
 people, but the hurt. And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, 5
 he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any
 thing against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him 6
 into the ¹dungeon of Malchijah ²the king's son, that was

¹ Or, *pit*² Or, *the son of Hammelech*

1. *And Shephatiah*] The removal of Jeremiah from prison to the court of the guard had facilitated the publication of his message, as we see from this *v.* Hence the princes take alarm and apply to the king for permission to put him to death.

Gedaliah] He was probably a son of the Pashhur who put Jeremiah in the stocks (ch. xx. 1 f.).

Jucal] the Jehucal of ch. xxxvii. 3.

Pashhur the son of Malchijah] the same who is mentioned ch. xxi. 1.

2. *He that abideth, etc.*] The *v.* is substantially identical with xxi. 9, and Co. following Du. considers that it is a later insertion in this place, on the ground that while such advice under the earlier circumstances was permissible, now in the actual presence of the enemy it would have been treasonable.

4. *the men of war that remain*] Cp. *v.* 22. The expression may indicate that many had gone over to the Chaldaeans, a fact which is also implied in *v.* 19. Doubtless also a considerable number had gone into exile already, and to them we must add those who had fallen in the siege.

5. *the king is not he, etc.*] The LXX, perhaps rightly, make this clause a comment of the narrator ("For the king was not able...against them").

6. *the dungeon of Malchijah*] mg. *pit*; a cistern for storage of water;

in the court of the guard: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, 7 but mire: and Jeremiah sank in the mire. Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, an eunuch, which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; 8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake 9 to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and ¹he is like to die in the place where he is because of the famine: for 10 there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the 11 prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts

¹ Heb. *he is dead*.

see on vi. 7. The depth and wretchedness of this place of confinement are shewn by the means employed to place Jeremiah in it.

the king's son] better than mg. *the son of Hammelech*. See on xxxvi. 26.

7—13. See introd. summary to section.

7. *Ebed-melech the Ethiopian*] a negro eunuch, attached to the court or harem after the Eastern custom. See on xiii. 23.

the gate of Benjamin] See on ch. xxxvii. 13.

9. *he is like to die* (mg. Heb. *he is dead*) *in the place where he is because of the famine*] *is dead of hunger on the spot*. Jeremiah was at death's door already, as suffering at once from hunger and from confinement in so dismal a dungeon. If food was almost exhausted, prisoners would naturally be the first to suffer.

for there is no more bread in the city] This again is an exaggeration shewing the eagerness of the speaker. If it had been absolutely true, there could have been no object in freeing Jeremiah. The obvious sense is that there was so scanty a supply of provision that there was little or no chance of any reaching Jeremiah in the place where he was then confined.

10. *thirty men*] The construction of the Heb. numeral is irregular, and we should read **three**, as under the circumstances a more likely number for this duty.

11. *under the treasury*] **to a room under the treasury**, a sort of lumber-room.

and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian ¹² said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, ¹³ and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the ¹⁴ prophet unto him into the third entry that is in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me. Then Jeremiah ¹⁵ said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, thou wilt not hearken unto me. So Zedekiah the king sware ¹⁶

old cast clouts and old rotten rags] worn out pieces of torn and ragged garments, to ease the pressure of the ropes.

13. *court of the guard]* See on xxxii. 2.

14—28 a. JEREMIAH ONCE MORE TENDERS SOLEMN
ADVICE TO THE KING.

The section may be summarized as follows.

(i) *vv. 14—18.* Zedekiah again seeks counsel from the prophet, who, after demanding and receiving an assurance of immunity, declares that, if the king surrenders, his life and the city shall be spared, whereas otherwise Jerusalem shall be burned, and Zedekiah himself shall not escape. (ii) *vv. 19—28 a.* The king objects that, if he follow this advice, he will meet personal injury from those Jews who are already in the enemy's hands. The prophet reassures him on this point and renews his urgent counsel in more detail. He pictures the women of the palace, led out in mournful procession by their captors, and chanting a lamentation as they go; while he repeats that the king shall be taken and the city burnt. Zedekiah pledges Jeremiah to secrecy. Accordingly, on being questioned by the princes as to the purport of the interview, he only reports his request not to be sent back to Jonathan's house.

14. *the third entry]* not mentioned elsewhere by this name, but perhaps identical with that which in 2 Kgs xvi. 18 is called "the king's entry." Gi. (followed by Du.) by a slight alteration of the MT. gets the meaning *the entry of the body-guard*. Cp. for the king's action ch. xxxvii. 17.

15. *thou wilt not hearken unto me]* Cp., as illustrating Zedekiah's weakness of character, his words in the next *v.* with those which he had addressed to the princes (*v.* 5).

secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and

18 thou shalt live, and thine house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their

19 hand. And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, in that which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well with thee, and thy

21 soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is

22 the word that the LORD hath shewed me: Behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and

16. *that made us this soul*] i.e. that gave us our life (cp. Is. lvii. 16), a form of oath suitable to the occasion when the prophet's life was in danger.

17. *go forth*] surrender thyself.

the king of Babylon's princes] an intimation that Nebuchadnezzar was not himself at this time in command of the besieging forces. See xxxix. 3, 5.

19—28 a. See introd. summary to the section.

19. *I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen away to the Chaldeans*] See on v. 4. These Jews, he fears, if the Chaldeans delivered him into their hands, would maltreat him for not doing himself as they had done at an earlier period, and so sparing the city the miseries of a siege. Cp. xxxvii. 13.

21. *the word*] viz. the picture of the women which follows. Dr. makes it to be an actual vision on the part of the prophet, and so renders "all the women...were brought forth...while they said, etc."

22. *all the women that are left*] the women of the harem generally, concubines and their attendants. If Zedekiah prove obstinate, these also will join in the reproaches that shall be heaped upon him.

those women shall say, ¹Thy familiar friends have ²set thee on, and have prevailed over thee: *now that thy feet are sunk in the mire, they are turned away back.* And ²³they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and ³thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire. Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of ²⁴these words, and thou shalt not die. But if the princes ²⁵hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death: also what the king said unto thee: then thou shalt say unto them, I ⁴presented my supplication ²⁶before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there. Then came all the princes ²⁷

¹ Heb. *The men of thy peace.*

² Or, *deceived thee*

³ Heb. *thou shalt burn &c.*

⁴ Heb. *caused to fall.*

Thy familiar friends, etc.] lit. as mg. *The men of thy peace.* The women's reproaches are in the *Kinah* measure.

have set thee on] incited, instigated thee. Cp. Obad. 7.

thy feet are sunk in the mire] "The metaphor answers to the experience through which the prophet had passed....He had been cast by his enemies into the cistern, and his feet had sunk in the mire; Zedekiah had been misled by his friends, but when his feet sank in the mire, no one drew him out." Peake.

^{23.} *And they*] Du. considers this *v.* an insertion, as adding nothing to what has been said already.

thou shalt cause, etc.] Heb. more forcibly, *thou shalt burn, etc.* This suits the parallelism better. Zedekiah through his obstinacy shall be as much the cause, as if he had set fire to Jerusalem with his own hands.

^{24.} *Let no man know*] Zedekiah's feebleness is again conspicuous in this and the two following verses. Although the saving of the prophet from conditions likely to prove fatal is not directly mentioned in the narrative as preserved to us, it is far from unlikely that it was one subject of the conversation. Thus the prophet may well have held himself justified in limiting his statement to the princes in accordance with Zedekiah's desire, especially when we remember that moral standards at that age were not altogether identical with our own.

^{26.} *I presented my supplication*] See on xxxvi. 7.

to Jonathan's house] See xxxvii. 15.

unto Jeremiah, and asked him : and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him ; for the matter was not ¹perceived. So Jeremiah abode in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

39 And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken, ²(in

¹ Or, *reported*

² See ch. lii. 4, &c., 2 Kings xxv. 1—12.

27. *perceived*] mg. *reported*, i.e. the princes were given no further particulars as to the conversation.

28. *of the guard*] See on xxxii. 2.

CH. XXXIX. 1—18. CAPTURE OF THE CITY. JEREMIAH'S FORTUNES. PROMISE TO EBED-MELECH.

(i) The words in brackets are clearly a gloss, introduced from lii. 4—7. "And it came to pass...taken" (xxxviii. 28 *b*) connects naturally with xxxix. 3. (ii) *vv.* 4—10 are absent from the LXX, they interrupt the train of thought and look like an abridgement of lii. 7—16. On the other hand it was not (as stated in these *vv.*) when the princes had taken up their position that Zedekiah, according to ch. lii., fled, but at an earlier stage (*v.* 7). Unless they are an insertion here, it is difficult to understand why no reference is made in them to the princes mentioned in *v.* 3. (iii) *vv.* 11—13. In these (also absent from LXX) Nebuzaradan is mentioned (*v.* 11 as well as *v.* 9), although, according to ch. lii. 12, he did not arrive at Jerusalem till a month later. Moreover, he is absent from the list in *v.* 3. Gi., Du. and Co. agree in rejecting all these *vv.*, Gi. speaking, however, less confidently as to (iii). See further in introd. and other notes on ch. lii.

The ch. may be summarized as follows.

(i) xxxviii. 28 *b*—xxxix. 3. After a siege by Nebuchadnezzar which lasted for eighteen months less one day, the wall was breached and the city captured. (ii) *vv.* 4—10. Zedekiah flees by the way of the Arabah, is overtaken, brought to Riblah, and, after his sons and the nobles have been slain, is blinded and carried in fetters to Babylon. Jerusalem is burned and its walls broken down. The remainder of the people are carried captive to Babylon, except the very poor who are given fields and vineyards to cultivate. (iii) *vv.* 11—14. Jeremiah, by Nebuchadnezzar's orders, is released and given in charge to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, who takes him to his house, permitting him to move about freely. (iv) *vv.* 15—18. While Jeremiah is still in the guard-court, he is charged with a message to Ebed-melech that in the overthrow of the city his life shall be spared, because he has put his trust in the LORD.

xxxviii. 28 *b*. *And it came to pass...taken*] Owing to a wrong division of chs. in MT. and A.V., these words were mistranslated in the

the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; in the eleventh² year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city:) that all the princes³ of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, ¹Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, ¹Rab-mag, with all the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. And it came to pass that when⁴ Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after them, and⁵

¹ Titles of officers.

latter ("and he was there when Jerusalem was taken"). In R. V. they are rightly rendered and connected directly in sense with ch. xxxix.

xxxix. 3. *and sat*] to carry out the matters arising from the capture. *Nergal-sharezer, etc.*] From the Eng. it would appear that there are six princes mentioned by name. In fact however there are but four at the most (and probably only two), viz. (a) Nergal-sharezer, (b) Samgar-nebo, (c) Sarsechim, (d) Nergal-sharezer. But (d) is probably an erroneous repetition of (a). Rab-saris (usually explained *chief of the eunuchs* or *chamberlains* but more probably *chief of the heads*, i.e. principal men) and Rab-mag (probably *chief of the soothsayers*) are the *titles* of those whose names they follow. Moreover, the first part of Samgar-nebo is probably a corruption of Sar-mag=Rab-mag, *chief of the soothsayers*, while the latter portion, inasmuch as it never elsewhere *ends* a name, is to be transferred to the beginning of the third name. Sarsechim, thus becoming Nebo-sarsechim, is an error for Nebushazban of v. 13. The above modifications of the text thus reduce the list to the more accurate form in which it appears in v. 13, viz. two names and two titles, i.e. Nergal-sharezer the Rab-mag and Nebushazban the Rab-saris. Nergal-sharezer was a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, and after the murder of Evil-Merodach (B.C. 560) seized the throne.

4-10. See introd. note and summary to ch.

4. *by the gate betwixt, etc.*] "on the S. of the city (the 'king's garden' was near the pool of Siloam, Neh. iii. 15), probably the fountain gate of Neh. ii. 14, iii. 15, xii. 37, the 'two walls' (cf. Is. xxii. 11) being those below this gate along the W. side of the E. hill of Jerusalem, and the E. side of the W. hill." Dr. See further in C. B. (Barnes) 2 Kgs xxv. 4. *Arabah*] the deep valley of the Jordan. See Deut. i. 1 R. V. mg.

overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he ⁶ gave judgement upon him. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also ⁷ the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in fetters, ⁸ to carry him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and ⁹ brake down the walls of Jerusalem. Then Nebuzaradan the ² captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the residue of the people that remained in the city, the deserters also, that fell away to him, and the residue of ¹⁰ the people that remained. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had

¹ Heb. *spake judgements with him*. See ch. xii. 1.

² See Gen. xxxvii. 36.

5. *the plains of Jericho*] the W. side of the Arabah.

Riblah] (*Ribleh*) between the mountain ranges of Lebanon and Hermon. It was a suitable halting-place for Nebuchadnezzar, as being on the high road between Babylon and Palestine and lying "on the banks of a mountain stream in the midst of a vast and fertile plain yielding the most abundant supplies of forage." Robinson's *Bible Researches*, III. 545.

gave judgement upon him] lit. *spake judgements with him*. See on ch. i. 16.

7. *Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes*] See on xxxiv. 3 and cp. Jud. xvi. 21. "Putting out the eyes has been at all times a common Oriental punishment....The frequency of the punishment in the time of the younger Cyrus is indicated by a passage in Xenophon, where it is said that men deprived of sight for their crimes were a common spectacle along the highways within his government." Rawlinson's *Herod.* vol. IV. p. 16. C.B. (Barnes), on the parallel passage in Kings, quotes Layard for modern instances in Persia.

fetters] The Hebrew word is dual, and the meaning therefore probably *two* chains. Cp. Acts xii. 6.

9. *Nebuzaradan*] He did not, however, arrive (lii. 12; 2 Kgs xxv. 8) till a month later.

captain of the guard] Heb. *chief of the executioners*.

that fell away to him] i.e. that went over to the Chaldaeans, and so were under Nebuzaradan from such time as he appeared in command.

10. *of the people*] Probably we should read, as in lii. 15 mg., *of the artificers*.

nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time. Now Nebuchadrezzar king of 11 Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well 12 to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. So Nebuzaradan the captain of 13 the guard sent, and Nebushazban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon; they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court 14 of the guard, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he 15 was shut up in the court of the guard, saying, Go, and speak 16 to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they ¹shall be accomplished before thee in that day. But I will deliver 17 thee in that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid.

¹ Or, *shall be before thee*

gave them...fields] but see on lii. 16.

11—14. See introd. summary to the section.

12. If we are to accept this as historical (see introd. note to ch.), Nebuchadnezzar's action was due to the fact that Jeremiah had consistently throughout counselled submission to him on the part of the Jews. See xl. 4.

look well to him] Heb. *set thine eyes upon him*.

13. For the names see on v. 3.

14. *Gedaliah]* See on xxvi. 24.

home] to the house, apparently meaning to the prophet's own dwelling.

dwelt] i.e. was no longer in confinement.

15—18. See introd. summary to the section. This section is certainly out of chronological order, as relating to a time before the capture of the city, but there is no sufficient reason for condemning it (with Du. and Co.) as unhistorical.

15. *came]* rather, **had come**.

17. *the men of whom thou art afraid]* meaning perhaps the princes, who were hostile to Jeremiah and so would punish Ebed-melech for helping him out of the dungeon, or, as v. 18 suggests, the victorious army, in which case cp. xxii. 25.

18 For I will surely save thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

40 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon. And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The LORD thy God pronounced this evil upon this place: and the LORD hath brought it, and done according as he spake; because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which are upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well

18. *thy life shall be for a prey unto thee*] See on xxi. 9.

CH. XL. 1—6. JEREMIAH IS RELEASED AND RETURNS TO GEDALIAH.

Du., Co. and Erbt agree in the view that there were different legendary accounts in connexion with Jeremiah's fortunes immediately subsequent to the capture of the city and that this section represents one of them. It is certainly difficult, in the absence of further information, to reconcile satisfactorily xxxix. 11—14 with the present passage. It is, however, possible that, in the absence of his protector Gedaliah from Jerusalem, he was again put in fetters through ignorance of his right to immunity and only set free after reaching Ramah, when the mistake was rectified by the intervention of Gedaliah or otherwise. In any case *v.* 1 is a later addition, as no utterance from the LORD follows. The captain of the guard's words in *vv.* 2, 3 are obviously unsuited to the speaker, although they are such as a Hebrew writer would put into Nebuzaradan's mouth. Cp. 2 Kgs xviii. 25.

The section may be summarized thus.

vv. 1—6. Jeremiah is taken in chains to Ramah. There Nebuzaradan, after declaring that Jerusalem's fall was a just consequence of the people's sins, gives the prophet his choice between going with him to Babylon, and dwelling with Gedaliah or elsewhere as he may choose. Jeremiah decides on going to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

1. *Ramah*] See on xxxi. 15.

4. *I will look well unto thee*] See on xxxix. 12.

unto thee; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee; whither it seemeth good and ¹convenient unto thee to go, thither go. Now while he was not yet gone back, Go back ⁵ then, *said he*, to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth ¹convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him ²victuals and a present, and let him go. Then went Jeremiah unto ⁶ Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

³Now when all the captains of the forces which were ⁷

¹ Or, *right* ² Or, *an allowance* ³ See 2 Kings xxv. 23, 24.

convenient] lit. as mg. *right*.

but if it seem ill... (5) *Go back then*, *said he*] The LXX have simply, “but, if not, depart, return,” and, as giving a much smoother sequence, preserve what is probably the original form. The latter part of *v.* 4 in MT. may have been suggested by Gen. xiii. 9, while the words “Now while...back” are also a gloss.

6. *Mizpah*] on a hill (*Neby Samwil*) $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles N.W. of Jerusalem.

CHS. XL. 7—XLI. 3. GEDALIAH IS SLAIN BY ISHMAEL.

Schmidt (*Enc. Bibl.* 238 *b*), on grounds which, when examined, appear quite insufficient, rejects this and the following section (xl. 7—xli. 18). Even Du. on the other hand accepts it as in the main an extract from Baruch's memoirs, adding that it forms one of the most remarkable and interesting accounts in the O.T. Difficulties in the narrative as it stands will be mentioned in the notes. The section may be summarized as follows. (i) *vv.* 7—12. On Gedaliah's being made governor of those left in the land, Ishmael and other captains came to him and received an assurance that, if they were loyal to Babylon, they should receive protection. He exhorts them to occupy themselves in gathering the produce of the land. The same is thereupon done by many Jews who now return from taking refuge in neighbouring countries. (ii) *vv.* 13—16. Johanan warns Gedaliah that Baalis, king of Ammon, had instigated Ishmael to kill him, and asks permission to slay the latter. Gedaliah refuses to believe the charge. (iii) xli. 1—3. Ishmael, accompanied by ten men, goes to Mizpah, and after being entertained by Gedaliah, murders him and all Jews and Chaldeans who were with him.

7—9. Abbreviated from 2 Kgs xxv. 23 f.

7. *all the captains of the forces*] the various leaders of bands among the Jews, who would keep out of the way during the presence of the

in the fields, even they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, ¹and of the poorest of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;
 8 then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the
 9 Maacathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be
 10 well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand before the Chaldeans, which shall come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine and summer fruits and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have
 11 taken. Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them

¹ Or, *even*

Babylonian forces and until they found what was likely to be the condition of the country and the nature of the new government.

8. *the Netophathite*] Netophah was apparently identical with *Beit Nettif*, a village W. of Bethlehem at the entrance to the Vale of Elah. See Buhl's *Geographie des alten Palästina*, p. 194. It was not far from Jerusalem (Neh. xii. 28).

Jezaniah] not the "Jezaniah" of ch. xlii. 1, where see note.

Maacathite] Maacah was S.E. of Hermon.

9. *to serve the Chaldeans*] The LXX here have "because of the servants of the Chaldaeans," i.e. the officers placed here and there through the land by the conquerors. This agrees with MT. in 2 Kgs xxv. 24, but probably the original reading of the Hebrew in both places (lost through confusing two very similar consonants) is that preserved by LXX in Kgs, viz. **the passing through of the Chaldaeans**, i.e. the danger arising from the frequent passage of Babylonian forces in military operations, such as attacks on Egypt.

10. *to stand before*] probably meaning that, as a servant of the Chaldaeans, he would be able in their presence to defend the interests of the Jews. See on xv. 1.

Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan; then ¹² all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains ¹³ of the forces that were in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, and said unto him, Dost thou know that Baalis the ¹⁴ king of the children of Ammon hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take thy life? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. Then Johanan the son of ¹⁵ Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it: wherefore should he take thy life, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant of Judah perish? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son ¹⁶ of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

12. *gathered wine...very much*] This was done in the 6th month (Aug.—Sept.), only two months (cp. xxxix. 2) after the capture of the city. It is clear that the Babylonians had not devastated the country, but “had risen above the methods of barbarism which characterized ancient and have characterized so much modern warfare.” Peake.

13—16. See introd. summary to section.

13. *Moreover...came*] The grammatical construction in the Heb. suggests that we should render, *Now...had come*.
fields] See note on v. 7.

14. *Baalis the king of the children of Ammon*] It is easier to see the motives of Ishmael than those of his instigator Baalis. The former no doubt felt aggrieved that he, although of royal birth (xli. 1), should be set aside in favour of Gedaliah, and at once determined to get rid of him and take his place. Baalis may have had a spite against Gedaliah and his family as friends of Jeremiah, and as having probably taken the side of that prophet openly, when (ch. xxvii.) he sent back the messengers of Ammon and the other neighbouring nations, refusing the alliance against the Chaldaeans which they had desired; or it may have been a design against Palestine generally which influenced him on this occasion, and the belief that, if he were to get rid of Gedaliah and the firm and peaceful rule which he seemed to be inaugurating, there would be more chance for himself in carrying out his plans of conquest.

15. *the remnant of Judah perish*] Johanan no doubt hoped to influence a high-minded man like Gedaliah by this argument that on his life depended the welfare of those who remained yet in the country.

- 41 ¹ Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and *one of the chief officers of the king*, and ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah;
 2 and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the
 3 king of Babylon had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found
 4 there, even the men of war. And it came to pass the

¹ See 2 Kings xxv. 25.

xli. 1-3. See introd. summary to the section. For *v.* 1 see 2 Kgs xxv. 25.

1. *in the seventh month*] three months after the capture and two after the burning of the city.

and one of the chief officers of the king] We should probably, with LXX, omit this clause. It is absent also from 2 Kgs xxv. 25.

they did eat bread together] i.e. Gedaliah received Ishmael as a guest. Hence the crime assumed a still more atrocious character.

2. *Then arose Ishmael...and the ten men*] Gedaliah's retinue may not have been very large, and were probably quite unsuspecting. The murders seem to have been committed privately at the entertainment. Next day (*v.* 4) no one knew of it. Ishmael's action was apparently useless as well as criminal. However, he may have been prepared to go any length to shew spite at the appointment of a ruler who was not, like himself (see xli. 1), of the royal house, or his object possibly was to keep the land in a state of unrest, so as to help out Baalis's ambitious wishes; also, if Baalis was going to annex Judah, Ishmael may have had an eye to the governorship.

3. The Jews on their return from the exile used to keep the third day of the seventh month (Tisri) as a fast in memory of Ishmael's deed (Zech. vii. 5, viii. 19).

even the men of war] Gedaliah's body-guard. But the words are absent, probably rightly, from LXX.

CH. XLI. 4-18. ISHMAEL COMMITS FURTHER MASSACRES AND CARRIES OFF CAPTIVES.

The section may be summarized as follows.

(i) *vv.* 4-10. The following day eighty pilgrims arrive. Ishmael goes weeping to meet them, and bids them come to Gedaliah. Having

second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it, that there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and 5 from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards shaven and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with ¹oblations and frankincense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the LORD. And Ishmael the son of 6 Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And it was so, when they came into the midst 7 of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men

¹ Or, *meal offerings*

thus decoyed them into the city, he puts them all to death, except ten men who purchase their lives by disclosing the places where they possess hidden stores of food. Ishmael fills a pit with the slain, and carries away captive all the rest of the inhabitants of Mizpah. (ii) *vv.* 11—18. Johanan and the captains who were with him go in pursuit of Ishmael, and release his captives. Ishmael himself with ten men escapes to the country of Ammon, while Johanan takes those whom he had rescued to the vicinity of Bethlehem, with a view of passing into Egypt as a refuge from the Chaldaeans.

4. *the second day*] probably meaning the next day.

5. *from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria*] These three towns were in Ephraim, and thus the pilgrims were descendants of members of the Northern kingdom. Cp. the contributions given by Manassites, etc., in Josiah's time for the repairs of the Temple (2 Chr. xxxiv. 9). Shechem, now *Nâblus*, is beautifully situated in a valley between the mountains Gerizim and Ebal. For Shiloh see on ch. vii. 12.

having their beards shaven and their clothes rent] in sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple.

having cut themselves] though prohibited by the Deuteronomic law. See on ch. xvi. 6.

oblations] For reading in mg. see on xvii. 26. Animal sacrifices could no longer be offered at the ruined Temple (Deut. xii. 13—18), but it was still open to them to bring other offerings to the site, and this they were about to do.

6. *weeping all along*] so as to feign equal concern with them for the fate of the Temple, and thus put them off their guard.

Come to Gedaliah] probably as governor, to whom therefore they should shew respect and offer greeting.

7. *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them*] See on v. 2.

- 8 that were with him. But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their
 9 brethren. Now the pit wherein Ishmael cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, by the side of Gedaliah, (the same was that which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel,) Ishmael the son of
 10 Nethaniah filled it with them that were slain. Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the children of Ammon.
 11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the
 12 evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that
 13 are in Gibeon. Now it came to pass that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of

8. *we have stores hidden*] In the East it is to this day a common custom to use "wells or cisterns for grain. In them the farmers store their crops of all kinds after the grain is threshed and winnowed. These cisterns are cool, perfectly dry, and tight. The top is hermetically sealed with plaster, and covered with a deep bed of earth." See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, pp. 509 f.

9. See 1 Kgs xv. 22; 2 Chron. xvi. 6.

by the side of Gedaliah] With the slightest possible change in the consonants of the MT. we may accept an almost certain correction, and read (with LXX) "was a great cistern" (tank for the storage of water). Cp. the tragic story of the "well" at Cawnpore in the Indian mutiny.

10. *the king's daughters*] not necessarily Zedekiah's daughters, but female members of the royal house, not taken away as captive by Nebuchadnezzar.

11—18. See introd. summary to the section.

12. *Gibeon*] See on xxviii. 1. The "great waters" apparently are to be identified with the "pool" of 2 Sam. ii. 13. Gibeon was about a mile N. of Mizpah.

Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all the people that Ishmael ¹⁴ had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. But ¹⁵ Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the children of Ammon. Then took ¹⁶ Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after that he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, even the men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: and they departed, and dwelt in 'Geruth ¹⁷ Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of ¹⁸ them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the land.

¹ Or, *the lodging place of Chimham*

14. *cast about*] an archaism, meaning turned round. Cp. John Gower (c. 1325—1408), "Then *cast* I all the world *about*," *Confessio Amantis*; and Sir Philip Sidney (1554—1586), "Musidorus could doe no more but perswade the mariners to *cast about* againe," *Arcadia*.

15. *went to the children of Ammon*] Cp. xl. 14.

16. *from Mizpah*] But it was not from Mizpah, but from the neighbourhood of Gibeon that they had been recovered. Therefore with Hitzig (followed by later commentators) read *all the remnant of the people whom Ishmael...had carried away captive from Mizpah*. A similarity between the two Hebrew verbs has evidently been the cause of the confusion.

even the men of war] probably a gloss.

17. *Geruth Chimham*] For Chimham see 2 Sam. xix. 37—40. *Geruth* occurs here only, and the mg. variant is a questionable rendering. Aquila and Josephus (*Ant.* x. 9. 5) read *Gidroth* (sheepfolds of) Chimham, while Gi. considers *Gidroth* to be probably a proper name.

to go to enter into Egypt] to prepare for the journey into Egypt, a journey which, according to the first words of the next verse, was undertaken from fear of the Chaldaeans. It seemed likely that the outbreak which had taken place in connexion with the overthrow and death of the governor appointed by the king of Babylon, might be revenged without much discrimination by that monarch.

- 42 Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and ¹Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near, and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we pray thee, our supplication ²be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, even for all this remnant; for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us: that the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein

¹ In ch. xliii. 2, *Azariah*.

² Heb. *fall*.

CHS. XLII. 1—XLIII. 7. MIGRATION OF THE PEOPLE TO EGYPT
IN SPITE OF JEREMIAH'S PROTEST.

The narrative here is generally admitted to be a trustworthy extract from Baruch's memoirs. Du., however, excepts from this judgement Jeremiah's reply (*vv.* 7—22), as providing, according to him, an irresistible opportunity to a supplementer to add extensively to the genuine nucleus which he admits to exist in *vv.* 19—21.

The section may be summarized as follows.

(i) xlii. 1—6. The captains and people beg Jeremiah to pray to the LORD on behalf of those who remain for guidance as to their course of action. The prophet undertakes to do so, while the people swear that they will abide by the result, whether it be for good or for evil. (ii) *vv.* 7—22. After ten days Jeremiah summons the applicants and announces that if they abide in the land, Jehovah will prosper them, as He has now changed His attitude towards them. They need not fear further hurt from Nebuchadnezzar. If on the other hand they insist on going to Egypt with a view to security, then sword and famine shall follow them there with fatal results to all. The prophet adds that they are not in earnest in asserting that they will abide by the Divine message, whatever it prove to be. As disobedience has been their characteristic in past time, so will it be now, and in consequence they shall be consumed by sword, famine, and pestilence. (iii) xliii. 1—7. The prophet's hearers refuse to believe that the message comes from Jehovah, but attribute it to Baruch, who, they say, desires to have them carried away by the Chaldeans to Babylon. Accordingly, the captains take all the people to Tahpanhes in Egypt.

1. *Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah*] See mg. We should probably (with LXX) read *Azariah* here as well. The name Jezaniah may be due to a copyist who thought that the names of captains here must correspond as closely as might be with the list in ch. xl. (see on *v.* 8 there).

from the least even unto the greatest] i.e. all, without exception.

2. *be accepted*] For mg. see on xxxvi. 7.

3. *that the LORD thy God may shew us*] They make up their

we should walk, and the thing that we should do. Then ⁴ Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass that whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back from you. Then they said to ⁵ Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful witness ¹amongst us, if we do not even according to all the word wherewith the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. Whether it be ⁶ good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the ⁷ LORD came unto Jeremiah. Then called he Johanan the ⁸ son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, ⁹ the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to ²present your supplication before him: If ye will still abide in this land, ¹⁰ then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid of the king ¹¹ of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him,

¹ Or, *against*

² Or, *lay*

minds to flee into Egypt, and only after they have done this, proceed to enquire God's will. Hence we cannot acquit them of hypocrisy. Cp. Ahab in 1 Kgs xxii. 3 ff.

^{5.} *amongst*] better, as mg. *against*, i.e. to bear witness and punish us if we fail to do our part as we now promise.

^{7—22.} See introd. summary to the section.

^{7.} *after ten days*] Pe. points out the importance of the *v.*, as giving us an insight into the nature of prophecy. Jeremiah distinguishes clearly between his own opinion, which was already a decisive one, and the Divine revelation that might be made to him, and he waits till the latter comes.

^{9—22.} Du. (see introd. note to section) considers *vv.* 15—18 as wholly an addition, and *vv.* 9—14 as containing much editorial matter.

^{10.} *then will I build you, etc.*] Cp. i. 10, xxiv. 6 for these figures.

I repent me] an anthropomorphic figure. I change my *conduct* towards you, which with *men* is commonly caused by change of *purpose*.

^{11.} *of whom ye are afraid*] They may well have feared that the

saith the LORD: for I am with you to save you, and to
 12 deliver you from his hand. And I will grant you mercy,
 that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return
 13 to your own land. But if ye say, We will not dwell in this
 land; so that ye obey not the voice of the LORD your God;
 14 saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where
 we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor
 15 have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: now there-
 fore hear ye the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah:
 thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, If ye wholly
 set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;
 16 then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye fear,
 shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the
 famine, whereof ye are afraid, ¹shall follow hard after you
 17 there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. So shall it be with
 all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn
 there; they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and
 by the pestilence: and none of them shall remain or escape
 18 from the evil that I will bring upon them. For thus saith
 the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and
 my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of
 Jerusalem, so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when
 ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration,
 and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye
 19 shall see this place no more. The LORD hath spoken
 concerning you, O remnant of Judah, Go ye not into Egypt:
 20 know certainly that I have testified unto you this day. For
 ye have dealt deceitfully ²against your own souls; for ye

¹ Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

² Or, *in your souls*

king's vengeance for the murder of Gedaliah would involve innocent and guilty alike.

12. *cause you to return*] better (seeing that they were already there), with a difference of vocalisation only in the original, *cause you to dwell in.*

14. *we shall see no war*] We shall be in a land further from Babylon, and therefore not so liable to invasion.

19. This connects well with v. 14, assuming (see introd. note) that vv. 15—18 are by a supplementer.

20. *have dealt deceitfully against your own souls*] i.e. *selves* or *lives*;

sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it: and I have this day declared it to you; but ye have not²¹ obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now therefore know²² certainly that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn there.

And it came to pass that when Jeremiah had made an⁴³ end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, wherewith the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words, then spake Azariah the² son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there: but Baruch³ the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death, and carry us away captives to Babylon. So Johanan⁴ the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and⁵ all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all the nations whither they had

mg. (less well) *in your souls*. It is best (with slight modification of the MT.) to render with LXX "ye have done evil against," etc.

xliii. 1—7. See introd. summary to the section.

2. *then spake Azariah*] See on ch. xlii. 1.

all the proud men, saying] The word in MT. (*ʾōmērim*) corresponding to "saying" here does not represent the ordinary Hebrew idiom. We should therefore, by a slight change in the original, read *the proud and defiant (hammōrim) men*.

Thou speakest falsely, etc.] The attack upon Baruch, and only indirectly and through him upon the prophet, may have arisen from their being reluctantly compelled to acknowledge that Jeremiah himself at any rate was possessed of integrity of purpose. This he had shewn by his refusal to seek protection and honourable treatment from the Chaldaeans, whose favour the worse section of his countrymen always suspected him of seeking.

5. *from all the nations*] These words, as implying a much wider

6 been driven to sojourn in the land of Judah; the men, and the women, and the children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah; 7 and they came into the land of Egypt; for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: and they came even to Tahpanhes. 8 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in 9 Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thine hand, and ¹hide them in mortar in the brickwork, which is at the entry

¹ Or, *lay them with mortar in the pavement (or square)*

dispersion of inhabitants of the Southern kingdom than had actually taken place, may be a scribe's insertion from ch. xl. 11 f. The LXX omit "from all the nations...driven."

7. *Tahpanhes*] See on ch. ii. 16.

CH. XLIII. 8—13. PROPHECY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CONQUEST OF EGYPT.

Du. considers this passage as "evidently a wholly worthless Midrash." Erbt deals at length with this statement, and in an eloquent passage (pp. 73 ff.) maintains that the prophet's action here is the outcome of an internal conflict, brought about by the charge made against him in vv. 2 f. Recent torture of soul resulted in this oracle from God, preceded by the action here related. The devastation, which he foretells, shall be wrought by the very person from whom his countrymen thought to escape by leaving Palestine for Egypt. Had they remained at home, Nebuchadnezzar would have been friendly to them. Through their action, opposed to the Divine command, they will be involved in the fate of Egypt.

The section may be summarized as follows.

vv. 8—13. While Jeremiah was in Tahpanhes, he received the Divine command to hide great stones at the entrance to Pharaoh's house there, and say, as he did so, to the men of Judah, that Jehovah will place the king of Babylon's throne over those stones, and that Nebuchadnezzar's coming will result in death and captivity. He will burn and carry away the Egyptian gods. He will deal with Egypt as a shepherd deals with his garment, and he will break down the obelisks of Beth-shemesh.

8. *in Tahpanhes*] The exiles would be compelled to halt at this frontier-fortress (now *Tell Defneh*) in order to secure permission to sojourn in the country, and obtain if possible such recognition from the king as would help to supply them with means of subsistence.

9. *hide them in mortar in the brickwork*] mg. *lay them with mortar in the pavement (or square)*. The MT. is questionable here. The words for "in the mortar" and "in the brickwork" resemble each other,

of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of 10 hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his ¹royal pavilion over them. And he shall 11 come, and shall smite the land of Egypt; such as are for death *shall be given* to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods 12 of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go

¹ Or, *glittering*

the first occurring nowhere else. The LXX read simply "in the fore-court," which is not justified by the Hebrew as we have it. Aq. Symm. Theod. have "in secret," omitting one of the consonants of the Hebrew word for "in mortar," and this probably gives us the true meaning, viz. *secretly, in the brickwork*. The incident (so Erbt and Co.) perhaps occurred at night. This is not inconsistent with the words "in the sight of the men of Judah," for cp. Ezek. xii. 7.

in the brickwork] If we keep the text as it stands, the word, which elsewhere means a brick-mould, may here mean something quadrangular (see mg.). It is perhaps "the large oblong brick pavement close to the palace fort built by Psammetichus I (B.C. 664—610), which was excavated by Prof. Petrie at Tell Defneh in 1886." Dr., p. 258, who adds references to Petrie and Maspero.

10. *Nebuchadrezzar*] Erbt (p. 72) points out that up to this time Jeremiah in his utterances seems to have avoided naming the king.

my servant] See on xxv. 9.

and will set] LXX (better) *he will set*.

his royal pavilion] rather, as mg. *glittering*, as this appears to be the meaning of the root, though the actual word occurs only here. It refers either to the richly decorated carpet on which the throne was to be placed or to the canopy over it.

11. *to death*] See on xv. 2.

12. *I will kindle*] LXX (better) *he will kindle*.

array himself...garment] The Heb. verb means to roll up, or to wrap round, as a garment, but interpretations of the figure here used differ: viz. (a) Nebuchadnezzar shall have no more difficulty in carrying off the spoil of Egypt than the shepherd has in *rolling up* his possessions in his garment and carrying them off (so Erbt); (b) the king of Babylon will take possession of the land itself, as easily as the shepherd

13 forth from thence in peace. He shall also break the ¹pillars of ²Beth-shemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of Egypt shall he burn with fire.

¹ Or, *obelisks*

² Or, *The house of the sun* Probably, *Heliopolis* or *On*.

wraps himself in his garment (so apparently R.V.), a figure, however, which is too violent to be probable. The LXX reading (so Co.), however unacceptable to modern taste, has a good deal to be said for its likelihood as expressive of the prophet's attitude towards Babylon and Egypt respectively; i.e. for Nebuchadnezzar the utter devastation of the land of Egypt will be as easy a matter as it is for the shepherd to cleanse his garment by removing one by one the vermin which infest it.

13. *Beth-shemesh*] Probably *Heliopolis* or *On*. The reference of the *v.* is to the temple of the sun, at the city called by the Greeks Heliopolis (*city of the sun*), about six miles N.E. of Cairo. The temple had in front of it an avenue of obelisks, one of which remains *in situ*. It was erected by Thothmes III (c. B.C. 1500). "Cleopatra's Needle," placed on the Thames Embankment in 1878, is another.

the houses...with fire] A fragmentary inscription of Nebuchadnezzar states that he invaded Egypt in the 37th year of his reign (B.C. 568), and defeated king Amasis (B.C. 570—526) with slaughter of men and horses. See Dr.'s note.

CH. XLIV. 1—30. JEREMIAH'S PROTEST AGAINST THE WORSHIP OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

We may note that this is Jeremiah's last recorded prophecy.

The exiles at Babylon before the overthrow of Jerusalem and the Temple argued that the national calamities were to be ascribed to the abolition of the forms of worship practised by their forefathers anterior to the changes introduced by Hezekiah and Josiah, and that the results shewed that Jehovah was unwilling or unable to help them in distress (see Ezek. viii. 12). The same reasoning commended itself to the refugees in Egypt, and is here rebuked by the prophet. Doubtless the *ch.* reproduces substantially the situation and Jeremiah's method of dealing with it, but probably it contains a considerable amount of expansion, specially in *vv.* 1—14, 20—23, 26—30.

The contents may be summarized as follows.

(i) *vv.* 1—10. Jeremiah points out to his countrymen scattered through Egypt that their own land has been laid waste because, in spite of repeated warnings on the part of the prophets, they had obstinately practised idolatry. Wherefore do they continue to act thus? Have they forgotten the wickedness shared by high and low in former generations, a wickedness maintained to the present day? (ii) *vv.* 11—14. Their portion shall be death by sword and famine, combined with disgrace and contumely. None of the Jews shall succeed in returning

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the 44
 Jews which dwelt in the land of Egypt, which dwelt at
 Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country
 of Pathros, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God
 of Israel: Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought
 upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and,
 behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth
 therein; because of their wickedness which they have com- 3
 mitted to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn
 incense, *and* to serve other gods, whom they knew not,
 neither they, nor ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit I sent 4
 unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and
 sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing
 that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their 5
 ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto
 other gods. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured 6

to Palestine, save fugitives. (iii) *vv.* 15—19. The people reject the prophet's exhortations, and declare that they will adhere to their present modes of worship, arguing that in past time, as long as they adopted this course, they prospered, whereas on its ceasing, national calamities succeeded. That worship, the women further plead, had the approval of their husbands. (iv) *vv.* 20—30. Jeremiah replies that those calamities were Jehovah's punishment for their idolatrous excesses. Inasmuch then as the people refuse to amend, he repeats his warning as to the results and adds that the king of Egypt shall fall before his enemies, even as did Zedekiah at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.

1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*] Apparently some little time had elapsed since the arrival of the fugitives, so as to allow for the development of the worship here spoken of. We must remember, however, that there were colonies of Jews in Egypt already. The occasion was probably a gathering of a large number of that nation for a festival in connexion with this particular cult.

at Migdol] on the N.E. border of Egypt, a little to the E. of Tahpanhes.

at Tahpanhes, and at Noph] See on ii. 16.

Pathros] Egyptian for "the land of the South," Upper Egypt. See on *v.* 15.

3. *burn incense*] For this expression (and so throughout the ch.) see on i. 16.

4. Cp. vii. 25 and elsewhere. We should perhaps read for "you" *them*, although "you" implies in a significant way the continuous personality of the nation.

6. Cp. vii. 20, xxxiii. 10, xlii. 18.

forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as
 7 it is this day. Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil against your own souls, to cut off from you man and woman, infant and suckling, out of the midst of Judah,
 8 to leave you none remaining; in that ye provoke me unto anger with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to sojourn; that ye may be cut off, and that ye may be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?
 9 Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah,
 10 and in the streets of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before
 11 your fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will set my face against you for
 12 evil, even to cut off all Judah. And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall; they shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine; they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, *and* an
 13 astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by
 14 the pestilence: so that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there,

7. *against your own souls*] See on xlii. 20, and cp. xxvi. 19.

8. *the works of your hands*] your idols.

9. *their wives*] rightly, by a slight deviation from MT. Cp. vv. 17, 21 (so Gi., Du. and Co.). LXX *your princes*.

11—14. See introd. summary to the ch.

11. *I will set my face*] See on xxi. 10.

12. Cp. xlii. 18.

shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they ¹have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return save such as shall escape.

Then all the men which knew that their wives burned ¹⁵ incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great assembly, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As ¹⁶ for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will ¹⁷ certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of ²victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But ¹⁸

¹ Heb. *lift up their soul*.

² Heb. *bread*.

14. *have a desire*] For lit. Heb. see on xxii. 27.
for none...escape] perhaps added afterwards as a correction to the earlier part of the *v.* on account of the actual return of certain fugitives. So Co.

15—19. See introd. summary to the ch. This passage, unlike the preceding, apparently comes intact from Baruch's memoirs.

15. *and all the women*] It has been suggested that it is hardly likely that women would have come so far, and that "even... Pathros" is a gloss. Pathros was the S. part of what is now called Egypt, but was once politically separated from it, Ethiopia claiming its possession. It is identical with the Thebais of the Greeks, commencing a few miles S. of Memphis, and extending to Syene on the first cataract.

a great assembly] Du. followed by Co. reads (by a slight alteration in MT.) *with a loud voice*.

17. *every word that is gone forth out of our mouth*] For this phrase as employed of vows see Numb. xxx. 2, 12; Deut. xxiii. 23; Jud. xi. 36; Ps. lxvi. 13 f.

the queen of heaven] See on ch. vii. 18.

victuals] lit. as mg. *bread*.

18. See introd. note on vii. 16—20. The *v.* alludes to the misfortunes reaching from Josiah's death at Megiddo to the flight into Egypt. The passage is important "as shewing the view taken of these misfortunes by Jews of the average type. Jeremiah regarded the misfortunes of his country as proofs of the displeasure of Jehovah: these Jews on the other hand of His impotence." Cheyne, *ad loc.* It also shews the popular opposition to Josiah's reform and its superficiality.

since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by
 19 the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to ¹worship her, and pour out drink
 20 offerings unto her, without our husbands? Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, even to all the people which had given him that answer,
 21 saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it not into his mind?
 22 so that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it
 23 is this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes,

¹ Or, *pourtray*

19. *worship*] The alternative in mg. suggests that her image may have been stamped upon them. For "cakes" see on vii. 18.

without our husbands] According to Num. xxx. 6 f., which in its present form doubtless represents a much older practice, the consent of the husband was necessary before the wife's vow could be binding. The women plead that they had their husbands' approval in this worship. Let Jeremiah therefore settle the matter with *them*.

20—30. See introd. summary of the ch.

20—23. Du., Erbt and Co. agree in considering that these vv. are a later addition, merely reproducing the thoughts contained in vv. 2—14.

21. *The incense*] See on v. 3; also on vi. 20.

22. *could no longer bear*] These words contain the pith of the answer to the people's argument that they had been more prosperous while openly practising idolatry than afterwards. Jeremiah points out that even though their national misfortunes were subsequent to Josiah's reformation, and therefore after what they might have called the golden age of idolatry had ceased, yet it was owing to the idolatry so long rampant, and even afterwards cherished and practised as far as its votaries dared, that the overthrow came. The long-suffering of God was at last exhausted.

nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as it is this day.

Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and with your hands have fulfilled it, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: establish then your vows, and perform your vows. Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, As the Lord God liveth. Behold, I watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine,

24. Here and in *v. 25* we return to Baruch's memoirs. *all Judah...Egypt*] LXX, probably rightly, omit.

25. *Ye and your wives*] better, with LXX, *Ye women. with your hands have fulfilled it*] have carried out your determination. For the expression cp. 1 Kgs viii. 15, 24.

establish then, etc.] ironically spoken. If ye will persist in spite of all my warnings, then be it so.

26—28. As these *vv.* stand, there is, if we take them literally, a considerable amount of contradiction (cp. *v. 14*). The Egyptian Jews are (*v. 26*) to perish completely; but (*v. 27*) some are to escape into Judah, while survivors in Egypt (*v. 28*) shall know whose word shall stand. Du., Erbt and Co. consider that *v. 26* was originally a continuation of the irony of *v. 25* ("establish then, etc.") and that it should accordingly read, "*let my name be no more, etc.*" (i.e. let my worship and with it all oaths taken in my name cease), while *v. 27* and the first part of *v. 28* are a subsequent addition, the second part of the latter remaining as genuine. At any rate we find from the Assuan papyri (see *Intro.* p. xix.) that the gloomy anticipations of the MT. were not in fact fulfilled; for the Egyptian Jews in the century following were a flourishing community and were worshippers of Jehovah and not idolators.

26. *my name shall no more be named*] The Jews in Egypt shall be exterminated.

27. *for evil, and not for good*] Cp. i. 12, xxxi. 28.

28 until there be an end of them. And they that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know
 29 whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs. And this shall be the sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely
 30 stand against you for evil: thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

29. *And this shall be the sign*] It has been inferred, but unnecessarily, from the close correspondence of these vv. with the above piece of history that these two verses are an interpolation made after the event. Pharaoh Hophra (the Greek Apries) reigned from B.C. 589 to c. 570, when he was overthrown by the troops whom he had sent against Cyrene, and who had mutinied (Herod. II. 152 ff.). Amasis succeeded him and handed him over to the Egyptians, who strangled him seven years later (Herod. II. 161—163, 169).

CH. XLV. 1—5. REBUKE AND PROMISE TO BARUCH.

The date assigned in v. 1 is rejected by Gi., Du. and Erbt on the ground that in Jehoiakim's fourth year, when the Roll was issued, the future of the Southern kingdom was not yet despaired of. Moreover, "these words" might naturally be referred to those of ch. xlv., and Baruch might be expected to place extracts such as this from his memoirs in due chronological order. But modesty might easily have led him to the present arrangement, as well as the fact that so personal a reference as this would consort ill with the contents of the Roll, dealing as it did with the nation collectively. Co. maintains the date given in v. 1. Baruch was filled with grief at the prophecies which had produced so profound an impression on the king and princes. He is here reminded that "the age is one in which he must not expect great things for himself, but must be content if he escapes with his bare life; even Yahweh (v. 4) is obliged to destroy the work of His own hands." Dr. The ch. is in metrical form.

The ch. may be summarized as follows.

vv. 1—5. Baruch, on writing the Roll, bewails the guilt and the coming fate of his loved nation. Jehovah rejoins that He has no alternative but to overthrow and uproot Judah, even though it is His chosen

The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch 45
 the son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at
 the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the
 son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, 2
 the God of Israel, ¹unto thee, O Baruch: Thou didst say, 3
 Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added sorrow to my
 pain; ²I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.
 Thus shalt thou say unto him, Thus saith the LORD: Behold, 4
 that which I have built will I break down, and that which
 I have planted I will pluck up; and this in the whole land.
 And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: 5
 for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD:
 but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places
 whither thou goest.

¹ Or, *concerning*

² See Ps. vi. 6.

people. He bids Baruch seek no great thing for himself, but promises him that in the midst of disaster his life shall be preserved.

1. *unto Baruch*] See on xxxii. 12.

these words] See introd. note for the difficulty in harmonizing this expression with the date given in the v. It is, however, not unnatural to suppose that this section stood in connexion with ch. xxxvi. in some way. Perhaps we should read "the words," referring to the Roll (ch. xxxvi. 1 ff.).

2. *unto*] rather, as mg. *concerning*.

3. *sorrow to my pain*] The "pain" was caused by the thought of his fellow-countrymen's sins and of the judgements impending on them; the "sorrow" by knowing what was in store for himself.

4. *Thus...him*] omit as a gloss. Baruch himself, not the prophet, is still addressed.

Behold, that which I have built, etc.] Baruch is pained at the calamities in which his country is involved, but let him be sure that the LORD, in bringing Himself to overthrow His cherished people, can only be thus acting because no other course is possible (see introd. note).

and this...land] probably a gloss (LXX omit). If the clause stands, the reference is to the overthrow of kingdoms by Nebuchadnezzar.

5. *seek them not*] What form Baruch's aspirations took can only be matter of conjecture. It has been suggested that as grandson of Maaseiah who was governor of Jerusalem in Josiah's reign (2 Chr. xxxiv. 8) he may have aspired to high office, or, as ch. xliii. 3 may be thought to hint, that he was "Chaldaizing" and looking in that direction for promotion.

thy life will I give unto thee for a prey] See on xxi. 9.

46 The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

CHS. XLVI.—LI. ORACLES AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONS.

Many recent commentators, in particular Schwally (Stade's *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentl. Wissenschaft* for 1888), maintain that the whole or a considerable part of these chs. is not the work of Jeremiah. Besides the general allegations that Jeremiah was not a prophet to the nations outside his own (in answer to which see Intr. p. xxi.), and that the literary style is not that of Jeremiah, arguments against their genuineness are (*a*) that in them Jehovah appears as a vengeful Deity, contrary to Jeremiah's view of Him, (*b*) that there is here no preaching of repentance, (*c*) that there is no explicit reference to the state of things in Judah. But it may be replied that (*a*) in these prophecies (except in xlvi. 10) it is a case not of vengeance but of Jehovah's judgement on guilt, (*b*) until we come to the book of Jonah (which is of late date) we have no preaching of repentance to the heathen, while in Nahum and Habakkuk's dealings even with their own nation there is little or no trace of it, (*c*) mention of the circumstances of Judah would have been irrelevant. In discussing this matter chs. 1., li. require separate treatment (see introd. note to them). We should add that the MT. of these chs. evidently contains a considerable amount of non-Jeremianic matter, although commentators, apart from those who, like Schwally above, reject the whole (such as Wellhausen and Du.), are by no means agreed as to the portions to be rejected. Kuenen, A. B. Davidson, and Erbt e.g. differ from one another as regards detail. Gi.'s general result is that the utterances in their present form, with the exception of ch. xlvii., are not Jeremianic. We may add that Co. accepts much more than Gi. See further in individual notes.

The occasion of these prophecies (see xlvi. 2) was Nebuchadnezzar's decisive victory over Pharaoh-neco at Carchemish (B.C. 605). They deal with the widespread results of the Babylonian supremacy upon the fortunes of the other nations, who were thus to suffer for their hostility to Jehovah's people in time past. Ch. xxv. forms an introduction to this group. See notes there, and for discussion as to the place originally occupied by the group, see on xxv. 13.

The order of the individual prophecies in the Hebrew is by no means the same as that of the LXX, who commence with Elam, place Babylon immediately after Egypt, and include other differences. See Intr. p. xlviii. The Hebrew order, however, is more likely to be correct, even judging the matter only from internal considerations. It is more natural, taking Egypt first, as the nation whose overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar would be the signal to the rest of a similar fate, to go thence to Philistia (including Tyre and Sidon), then (passing round to the East of Palestine) Moab, Ammon, and Edom, then Damascus as representing the kingdoms of the north, Kedar and Hazor as indicating the kings

Of Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco king of 2
 Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish,
 mentioned in the summary of ch. xxv. (v. 24), while lastly the nations
 of the East are included under Elam.

CH. XLVI. 1—28. PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT. ENCOURAGE-
 MENT TO ISRAEL.

The ch. plainly consists of two parts, viz. (a) vv. 3—12, and
 (b) vv. 13—28, while the introduction (vv. 1, 2) tells us the occasion of
 the earlier portion, viz. the defeat of Egypt by Babylon at Carchemish,
 a turning point in the history of the time.

The contents may be summarized as follows.

(i) v. 1. Title of the group. (ii) vv. 2—12. The prophecy con-
 cerning Egypt. Make ready, ye soldiers, arm yourselves, footmen and
 horsemen, for the battle. Alas! they are routed and flee: by the
 Euphrates they are overtaken and fall. Egypt rose in proud boasting,
 like the fertilising swelling of its own great river Nile. Despite its
 strength and pretensions, Jehovah will avenge Himself upon its army in
 bloody defeat, for which there is no cure. Egypt becomes a reproach
 to the nations of the earth. (iii) vv. 13—26. Description of Nebu-
 chadnezzar's conquest of Egypt. Let her prepare to withstand the attack
 to which her neighbours have succumbed. Her mighty ones fall before
 Jehovah who is mightier than they. The strangers there call upon each
 other to flee to their several countries. Pharaoh's name is but an empty
 noise. The time for deliverance he has let pass by. A foe lofty as
 Tabor or Carmel comes. Make ready for exile. Egypt is as a heifer
 stung by a gadfly. Her warriors flee like calves sleek but cowardly.
 She is as the serpent in a bushy lair, driven back by a host of wood-
 cutters. Her forests, dense though they be, are cut down, for her foes
 are numberless as an army of locusts. She, her gods, and her kings,
 are delivered over to the ruler of the north, but in the end she shall
 be re-inhabited. (iv) vv. 27, 28. Jacob need not fear. The captives
 shall return and dwell secure in Jehovah's favour. Other nations shall
 be blotted out of existence; not so shall it be with Israel.

2—12. Co. declines to accept objections which have been brought
 by some recent commentators to the substantial genuineness of these vv.,
 and Gi. on the whole agrees, but considers the passage to have been
 expanded.

2. *Pharaoh-neco*] This monarch (B.C. 610—594) had defeated and
 slain Josiah at Megiddo (B.C. 608). In three months he had deposed
 Josiah's successor, Jehoahaz, and imprisoned him at Riblah, and had
 set up Jehoiakim. He was extending his conquests in the Asiatic
 direction when he was overthrown at Carchemish (B.C. 605).

Carchemish] *Gargamish* in Assyrian inscriptions, was not Circesium
 at the junction of the rivers Chaboras and Euphrates, but considerably
 higher up the latter stream and some distance to the north of lat. 36°.

which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

- 3 Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.
 4 Harness the horses, and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, put on the coats of mail. Wherefore have I seen it? they are dismayed and are turned backward; and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: terror is on every side, saith the LORD. Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; in the north by the river Euphrates have they stumbled and fallen. 'Who is this that riseth up like the Nile, whose waters toss themselves like the rivers? Egypt riseth up like the Nile, and his waters toss themselves like the rivers: and he saith, I will

¹ Or, *Who is like the Nile that riseth up, like the rivers whose waters toss themselves? Egypt is like the Nile that riseth up* &c.

Professor Rawlinson (*Anc. Mon.* II. 475) describes it as the key of Syria on the east and as commanding the ordinary passage of the Euphrates. It was, he adds, the only great city in that quarter. The meaning of the name is unknown.

3—6. These verses give us a lively description of the preparation and the advance, which were followed by the disastrous defeat at Carchemish.

3. Order ye] rather, **Prepare ye**. Or, more literally, *Set in line. buckler and shield*] The former of these was a small round shield which the light-armed troops carried, while the latter covered the whole body and was borne accordingly by the heavy-armed.

4. *Harness the horses*] to the chariots which formed a very important feature of Egyptian armies.

get up, ye horsemen] probably, **mount the steeds**.

5. *Wherefore...dismayed*] The LXX rightly omit the first Hebrew verb, and render, "Wherefore are they dismayed?"

terror is on every side] Jeremiah's characteristic expression. See on ch. vi. 25.

7, 8. *Who is this...Egypt riseth up like the Nile*] The mg. is to be preferred. Egypt's boast that she will spread herself in conquest over the earth is illustrated by the annual rise of the Nile, flooding the adjacent country. Cp. in Is. viii. 7 f. the illustration of Assyrian conquest of Judaea taken from the swelling waters of the Euphrates.

8. *and his waters toss themselves like the rivers*] The LXX omit, but, as the v. stands in MT., this clause is wanted for the parallelism. *he saith*] viz. Pharaoh, addressing his army.

rise up, I will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. Go up, ye horses; and rage, ye 9 chariots; and let the mighty men go forth: Cush and Put, that handle the shield; and the Ludim, that handle and bend the bow. For that day is *a day* of the Lord, the 10 LORD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour and be satiate, and shall drink its fill of their blood: for the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm, 11 O virgin daughter of Egypt: in vain dost thou use many medicines; there is no healing for thee. The nations have 12 heard of thy shame, and the earth is full of thy cry: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, they are fallen both of them together.

the city and] Unless, with LXX, we omit these words, we should probably understand the Hebrew substantive collectively, *cities*.

9. Probably a continuation of Pharaoh's appeal to his warriors, as put into his mouth by Jeremiah.

Go up] The summons is to cavalry, chariots, and infantry that they should set forth from Egypt.

Cush and Put...and the Ludim] the mercenary troops, who formed from the days of Psammetichus the chief part of the Egyptian armies. The Ethiopians (Cush) were children of Ham (Gen. x. 6). The situation of Put is doubtful. It is generally placed on the N. coast of Africa, W. of Egypt, but may have been Punt, a country on the Red Sea. The Ludim (see Gen. x. 13) were also Africans. Possibly, however, we should read *Lubim* here, as in Nah. iii. 9, i.e. the people of Libya (W. of Egypt). We have the three peoples here mentioned spoken of again as Egyptian mercenaries in Ezek. xxx. 5.

bend] literally, *tread*, string.

10. *For*] rather, **But**. For the language here cp. Is. xxxiv. 5, 6, 8. The expression of fierce vengeance, adduced by Schwally and others (see introd. notes) as an argument for rejecting the passage, is not unnatural, when we consider that the death of Josiah and captivity of Jehoahaz (cp. xxii. 10) were still fresh in memory.

11. *balm*] See on viii. 22, xxx. 13.

Egyptian knowledge of medicine is celebrated by Homer (*Od.* iv. 229). Cyrus and Darius both sent to Egypt for medical men (Herod. III. 1, 132); cp. Pliny XIX. 5.

12. *thy shame*] The LXX, "thy voice," requires but a slight alteration of MT. and one which improves the parallelism.

the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty] The heroes

- 13 The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt.
- 14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand forth, and prepare thee; for the sword hath devoured round about thee. ¹Why are thy strong ones swept away? they stood not, because

¹ Or, according to some ancient authorities, *Why is thy strong one swept away? he stood not &c.*

fighting on the Egyptian side tumble over one another in their blind flight. Cp. Lev. xxvi. 37.

13—26. See introd. note to the ch. and summary. Gi. rejects as later all that follows v. 12 as involving repetitions, looseness of structure, and vagueness in style, criticisms which (see note on vv. 2—12) he also brings to bear on the earlier part of the ch. Co. on the other hand fully accepts this later portion. Even if it be genuine, we cannot be certain of the date. It may belong to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, or to Jeremiah's residence in Egypt, when (see xliii. 8—13) the Babylonian invader was expected. See further on v. 17.

14. *Migdol*] See on xliv. 1. For Noph and Tahpanhes see on ii. 16. Migdol was the border town in the Asiatic direction and Noph the capital city of Lower Egypt. The other proper names in the v. (omitted by LXX) are probably later glosses.

Stand forth] take up a defensive position.

hath devoured] The neighbouring nations had been subdued.

round about thee] The LXX read "thy thicket," which can be obtained by an inconsiderable modification of MT. and receives a certain amount of support from the metaphor in vv. 22 f.

15. *Why...swept away?*] The mg. is to be preferred. The adjective in the Hebrew is plural, while both the verb connected with it and the pronouns that follow are in the singular. Hence we conclude that the singular is right. But probably we should, with LXX, divide the Hebrew verb rendered "swept away" into two words, translating with them, "Why is Apis fled? Thy mighty one stood not, because, etc." The sacred bull Apis worshipped at Memphis is called *the mighty one* (the word in MT. being often used of bulls), i.e. the deity of Egypt, just as Jehovah is named the Mighty One of Jacob or of Israel in Gen. xlix. 24; Is. i. 24; xlix. 26, etc. "The authority of the Egyptian-Jewish version in a prophecy relative to Egypt is not slight" (Cheyne, *ad loc.*). A failure to understand this application of the word may have early induced a Hebrew copyist to alter it to the plural (which was effected by the insertion of the smallest Hebrew letter). For the thought of the Egyptian gods as overthrown before the Eastern power cp. Is. xix. 1, xlv. 1 f.

the LORD did ¹drive them. He made many to stumble, 16
yea, they fell one upon another: and they said, Arise, and
let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our
nativity, from the oppressing sword. They cried there, 17
Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath let the
appointed time pass by. As I live, saith the King, whose 18
name is the LORD of hosts, surely like Tabor among the
mountains, and like Carmel by the sea, so shall he come.

¹ Or, *thrust them down*

drive them] rather, as mg. *thrust them down*.

16. As the latter part of the *v.* implies that the speakers are foreigners, who, however, according to the present MT. have not been mentioned, Du. and others (with a certain amount of support from LXX) suggest that, with a slight emendation of the Hebrew, we should read, *Thy mingled people* (see on xxv. 20) *have stumbled and fallen; and they said one to another, Arise, etc.* Co., however, prefers to omit a considerable part of the *v.*, so as to continue Apis as the subject.

to our own people] The "mingled people," i.e. foreigners in the country, mercenary troops and traders, as belonging to various nations, propose among themselves to return to their several countries (cp. *v.* 21). *the oppressing sword*] See on xxv. 38.

17. *They cried there...a noise*] Read, *Call ye the name of Pharaoh* (so far accord Syr. and Vulg., and so the LXX, who add Neco) *a Crash*. Thus Dr., who compares for a name symbolical of a great disaster xx. 3, and for the Hebrew word used here xxv. 31 ("a noise"); Hos. x. 14; Am. ii. 2 ("tumult"). Cp. Ps. xl. 2 R.V. mg., "*tumult or destruction*."

he hath let the appointed time pass by] the time for effectual preparation to resist. The period of grace is over. The Hebrew verb in this clause (*he'ebir*) is thought to be a play on the name Hophra (cp. Is. xxx. 7 with note in C.B. for a contemptuous play on a name for Egypt). If this be so, the *v.* can hardly be a gloss (Du.) or otherwise non-Jeremianic (Gi.), and it will help to authenticate the whole passage (*vv.* 14 ff.). A later writer would probably have known that it was as a matter of fact not Hophra but his successor Amasis who was ruler of Egypt at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion (see on xliii. 13).

18. The foe (unnamed, but meaning Nebuchadnezzar, unless the passage is late, and Alexander the Great is intended; so Schmidt) shall resemble these mountains as standing out conspicuous. Tabor, as rising in the midst of an extensive plain, is more striking than even loftier hills, which have not its advantages in the way of position. Carmel (about 600 feet above the sea) stretches as a long bold promontory into the Mediterranean.

- 19 ¹O thou daughter that dwellest in Egypt, ²furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall become a desolation, and
 20 shall be burnt up, without inhabitant. Egypt is a very fair heifer; *but* ³destruction out of the north is come, ⁴it is come.
 21 Also her hired men in the midst of her are like calves of the stall; for they also are turned back, they are fled away together, they did not stand: for the day of their calamity
 22 is come upon them, the time of their visitation. ⁵The sound thereof shall go like the serpent; for they shall march with

¹ Or, *O thou that dwellest with the daughter of Egypt* ² Heb. *make thee vessels of captivity.* ³ Or, *the gadfly* ⁴ Or, according to many ancient authorities, *upon her* ⁵ Or, *Her sound is like that of the serpent as it goeth*

19. *O thou daughter that dwellest in Egypt*] the population of Egypt personified, preferable to mg. *O thou that dwellest with the daughter of Egypt.*

furnish thyself to go into captivity] more literally as mg. *make thee vessels of captivity*, supply thyself with all that thou wilt need as thy outfit for exile. Cp. Ezek. xii. 3 mg.

Noph] See on ii. 16.

20. This simile for Egypt may be suggested by Apis the bull god. See on v. 16.

but destruction out of the north is come] better, as mg. *the gadfly*. This rendering of the word (not found elsewhere) is in all probability right, though not universally accepted. Egypt is driven to flight by the stings inflicted by her foe.

it is come] mg. obtains by a very slight change in the Hebrew *upon her*. This has the support of LXX, Syr., Targ., Vulg. But for MT. we may cp. Ps. xcvi. 13.

21. *her hired men*] her mercenary troops.

like calves of the stall] See on xlv. 30. The reference is to the Ionian and Carian soldiers, who (Herod. 11. 163) numbered 30,000, and lived on the Pelusiatic branch of the Nile in a fertile district. Hence they seem to have earned the description given of them here, and were useless in war (Herod. 11. 152 ff.). Cp. Mal. iv. 2.

22. *The sound thereof shall go like the serpent*] better, as mg. *Her sound is like that of the serpent as it goeth*. The voice of Egypt in her feebleness as she flees away from the enemy shall be like the voice of a serpent hissing, i.e. like a serpent hissing impotently at the woodcutters who disturb its retreat through the thick underwood. For "as it goeth" the LXX (but probably through an early confusion between two Greek words on the part of a scribe) read "hissing." The serpent formed an important feature in the religion of the Egyptians, who worshipped Kneph under this form. The hostile army is likened in these

an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. They shall cut down her forest, saith the LORD, ²³ though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the locusts, and are innumerable. The daughter of Egypt ²⁴ shall be put to shame; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north. The LORD of hosts, the ²⁵ God of Israel, saith: Behold, I will punish Amon of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with her gods, and her kings; even Pharaoh, and them that trust in him: and I will ²⁶ deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and afterwards it shall be

¹ Or, for

vv. to a host of persons clearing away a forest for firewood. The denseness of the forest represents the number and populous character of the cities of Egypt. Dr. compares Is. x. 18 f., 33 f.

with axes] This would make a deep impression upon the mind of nations like the Jews, who had no such custom. "The battle-axe was a weapon but rarely employed by the Assyrians. It is only in the very latest sculptures, and in a very few instances, that we find axes represented as used by the warriors for any other purpose besides the felling of trees. Where they are seen in use against the enemy, the handle is short, the head somewhat large, and the weapon wielded with one hand." Rawlinson, *Anc. Mon.* i. 459.

hewers] or, less well, *gatherers* of firewood.

^{23.} *though*] better, as mg. *for*.

they are more] i.e. the enemy.

the locusts] See on Joel i. 4, C.B. (Driver).

^{25.} *Amon of No*] i.e. the chief god worshipped in No (cp. No-Amon, Nah. iii. 8). Thebes, the capital of Upper Egypt (now Luxor), a city of great interest from its remains of antiquity in the way of sculpture and tombs. It supplanted Memphis as a great centre, but declined under the Ptolemies. See Ezek. xxx. 14 ff. Amon was represented in various ways, e.g. as a figure with a ram's head and human body. "In course of time he absorbed into himself almost all the other deities of Egypt." Sayce, *Anc. Empires*, p. 63.

and Pharaoh...her kings] omit with LXX.

them that trust in him] those Jews who still persistently trusted in Egypt as a support against Babylon.

^{26.} The *v.* may be well suspected as a gloss by a scribe who desired in the latter part of it to soften the dismal forecast for Egypt, especially as words of corresponding comfort follow for his own people. Cp. xlviii. 47, xlix. 6, 39. Co., however, here (and in ch. xlviii.) maintains the genuineness, comparing for the latter part Ezek. xxix. 13 f.

- 27 inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD. ¹ But fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him
28 afraid. Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD; for I am with thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise ²leave thee unpunished.

- 47 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

¹ See ch. xxx. 10, 11.

² Or, *hold thee guiltless*

27, 28. See introd. summary to the ch. See also on ch. xxx. 10, 11, where almost exactly the same words are found in MT. Also for "correct" (*v.* 28) see on ii. 19. The *vv.* imply that the exile has begun and thus cannot date from "the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (*v.* 1).

CH. XLVII. 1—7 (=LXX. CH. XXIX. 1—7). PROPHECY AGAINST THE PHILISTINES.

Gi. (see introd. note on xlvi.—li.) accepts this prophecy as genuine, and is supported by Co., who refers to the four parallels in subject, viz. Am. i. 6—8; Is. xiv. 29—32; Ezek. xxv. 15—17, and Zeph. ii. 4—7, with none of which does this ch. exhibit any points of contact, as in all probability it would, had it been a late composition. Erbt, however, accepts *vv.* 6 f. only. Du. and others (see introd. note on the whole group) place the ch. late.

We may summarize thus.

(i) *v.* 1. Title and date of the prophecy. (ii) *vv.* 2—7. Nebuchadnezzar's host, as a flood from the north, shall bring destruction and woe on the land. Fathers in their terror at the invasion flee in panic, forgetting their children. The cities of Philistia shall be spoiled and empty. Will the sword of Jehovah never be sheathed? Yet how can it be so, seeing that He has charged it with this terrible duty?

1. This *v.* in LXX consists simply of the words "Concerning the Philistines." At any rate we shall probably be right in considering "before that...Gaza" as a gloss added by a scribe who had regard to *v.* 5, but failing to see that the disaster there spoken of was to come on Gaza from the north, not from Egypt, identified it with Pharaoh-neco's capture of "Kadytis," probably Gaza (Herod. II. 159), after the battle of Megiddo (B.C. 608).

Thus saith the LORD: Behold, waters rise up out of the ² north, and shall become an overflowing stream, and shall overflow the land and all that is therein, the city and them that dwell therein: and the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. At the noise of the ³ stamping of the hoofs of his strong ones, at the rushing of his chariots, at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers look not back to their children for feebleness of hands; because ⁴ of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the ¹isle of

¹ Or, *sea coast*

2—7. THE PROPHECY REGARDING PHILISTIA.

2. *waters rise up*] In xlvi. 8 the same figure was used for an army. Cp. Is. viii. 7 (on which Co. thinks this *v.* to be based), where the Assyrian army is likened to the floods of the Euphrates.

an overflowing stream] a river suddenly swelling up through the effect of the winter rains; a frequent occurrence in Palestine.

and the men...shall howl] Co. rejects this part of the *v.* both as overpassing the proper limits of the metre, and suggesting a universal judgement, which would be, according to him, a later conception.

3. *At the noise...wheels*] Gi. omits all three clauses, Co. the middle one; both objecting on metrical grounds.

strong ones] See on viii. 16.

4. The text is difficult, and may be corrupt. As Co. points out, the Hebrew for "that remaineth" is rather a *survivor*, one who has *escaped*. Moreover, he remarks that we have no reason from other sources to suppose that, as the *v.* implies, the Philistines were the chief allies of the Phoenicians ("Tyre and Zidon"). He therefore reads (changing slightly the MT.) "all the remnant of their excellency." Both Gi. and Co. make the next clause ("for...Philistines") a gloss. The LXX support this view, and render the last clause of the *v.* "and the LORD will destroy the remnant of the islands," omitting "Caphtor."

every helper that remaineth] in other words the Philistines, the other helpers having been already cut off.

the remnant of the isle of Caphtor] the few of the Philistine nation that still survive after the wars with Egypt and Assyria, from which they had long suffered. Caphtor is spoken of also in Deut. ii. 23; Amos ix. 7, as the original abode of the Philistines. It is probably to be identified with Crete.

isle] For *mg. sea coast* see on xxv. 22.

5 Caphtor. Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is brought to nought, the remnant of their valley: how long
6 wilt thou cut thyself? O thou sword of the LORD, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thyself into thy
7 scabbard; rest, and be still. How canst thou be quiet, seeing the LORD hath given ¹thee a charge? against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore, there hath he appointed it.

¹ Heb. *it*.

5. *Baldness*] in token of mourning. See on xvi. 6.

Gaza] important from its situation at the junction of the roads for caravans from Egypt and Arabia.

Ashkelon] mentioned again in v. 7. Co., however, proposes to substitute here Ashdod, while Rothstein thinks that the latter has fallen out through the similarity of the two words. Peake suggests that, if so, it should not precede but follow Ashkelon on account of its connexion (Josh. xi. 22) with the Anakim. See next note.

the remnant of their valley] better, as LXX, *the remainder of the Anakim* (the old race of giants, see Num. xiii. 33; Deut. ii. 10, and elsewhere). This avoids the unsuitable description of the country referred to as a "valley." But with a change of one consonant Co. conjectures (for "their valley") Ekron, and cps. Am. i. 7, 8.

cut thyself] in mourning. See on xvi. 6; cp. Deut. xiv. 1. The question is addressed to the survivors.

6, 7. These vv. have been suspected, but on insufficient (partly metrical) grounds. They contain (a) the cry of the Philistines for mercy, (b) the prophet's reply.

7. *How canst thou*] rather, with LXX, Syr., Vulg. *How can it....* So correct "thee" by mg. *it*, the sea shore, the Philistine and Phoenician coast.

CH. XLVIII. 1—47 (=LXX. CH. XXXI. 1—47). PROPHECY AGAINST MOAB.

The comparative length of this utterance of itself makes it probable that it has been considerably expanded, and there is a general agreement among modern commentators on this head, though with a good deal of difference as to the parts to be considered secondary. Gi. makes the whole to be spurious. It is, however, unlikely that in the utterance of prophecies of this kind so important a people as Moab would be omitted. See on v. 3. On the other hand the fact that the ch. includes sometimes the substance, sometimes the actual words of Is. xv., xvi.; Am. ii. 1—3; Zeph. ii. 8—10; cp. Num. xxiv. 17, and the probability that Israel's feelings of hatred towards Moab (Is. xxv. 10—12) would prompt later writers to expand a prophecy uttered against that nation, are a

Of Moab. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of 48
Israel: Woe unto Nebo! for it is laid waste; Kiriathaim is
put to shame, it is taken: ¹Misgab is put to shame and
²broken down. The praise of Moab is no more; in Hesh-
bon they have devised evil against her, Come, and let us

¹ Or, *the high fort*

² Or, *dismayed*

strong support to the view that we have here a great extension of the original utterance.

The ch. may be summarized as follows.

(i) vv. 1—10. The cities of Moab are overthrown. It remains only to flee. Gods and their followers shall be led captive, city and country laid waste. The work is Jehovah's. Cursed be he who does it negligently. (ii) vv. 11—19. Political disaster is new to Moab. He has not had the discipline which is now to be his lot. His god disappoints him, as Israel was disillusioned when they trusted in Beth-el. His chosen warriors are slain. Bewail ye his fate. Dibon is cast down. Aroer questions the fugitives for news. (iii) vv. 20—28. Destruction is coming on Moab's many cities. As he mocked Israel, so shall he be himself a derision. O inhabitants, take refuge like doves in the rocks. (iv) vv. 29—39. Moab's well-known haughtiness has ended in disaster. I will weep for her fruits and vineyards. Throughout the land there is woe. Worship has perforce ceased. Signs of mourning are on every side. Moab is a derision to all. (v) vv. 40—47. The enemy shall descend like an eagle. The mightiest shall be terrorized. None shall escape the visitation or captivity. Yet in the end her fate shall be reversed.

1. *Moab*] Its territory was the high tableland E. of the Dead Sea. See further on v. 2.

Nebo] not the mountain (Deut. xxxii. 49, xxxiv. 1), but the city (Num. xxxii. 38). It was taken by Mesha king of Moab (c. 895 B.C.) according to the records of the "Moabite stone." See transl. of lines 14—18 in HDB. III. 406. Kiriathaim, Kerioth, Jahzah, Dibon, Aroer, Bozrah (Bezer), Beth-diblathaim, Baal-meon (see on v. 23), and Horonaim are also mentioned on that stone.

Kiriathaim] probably *Kureyat*, ten miles N. of the Dead Sea.

Misgab] better, as mg. *the high fort*. Cp. Is. xxv. 12.

broken down] better than (mg.) *dismayed*. So in vv. 20 and 39.

2. *in Heshbon they have devised*] There is a play on the two Hebrew words thus rendered (*h' Heshbon hash'bu*) which might be represented in English by *in Devices they have devised*. Heshbon, one of the chief cities of Moab, lay to the N.E. of the Dead Sea, and was considered the N. boundary of Moab till Reuben, on entering Palestine, claimed the territory between it and the Arnon which enters the Dead Sea about the middle of its E. side. Of the cities assigned (Josh. xiii. 15 ff.) to Reuben many are here mentioned as occupied by Moab. Hence the

cut her off from being a nation. Thou also, O Madmen, shalt be brought to silence; the sword shall pursue thee.
 3 The sound of a cry from Horonaim, spoiling and great
 4 destruction! Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused
 5 a cry to be heard. ¹For by the ascent of Luhith with continual weeping shall they go up; for in the going down of Horonaim they have heard the distress of the cry of
 6 destruction. Flee, save your lives, and be like ²the heath
 7 in the wilderness. For, because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou also shalt be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity, his priests and his
 8 princes together. And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape; the valley also shall perish,

¹ See Is. xv. 5.

² See ch. xvii. 6.

constant hostility between Moab and Israel (Jud. iii. 12 ff.; 1 Sam. xiv. 47, etc.).

O Madmen, shalt be brought to silence] Here again there is a play on the sound in the Hebrew which is, *Madmên, tiddômmi*. But perhaps we should read with the LXX and Syr. *thou* (i.e. Moab) *shalt be utterly brought to silence*.

4, 5. Both these *vv.* are probably later than Jeremiah.

4. *her little ones have caused a cry to be heard*] Read rather, with LXX, *they make a cry to be heard unto Zoar* (S.E. of the Dead Sea). The point then is that the cry extends throughout Moab from N. to S. Cp. Is. xv. 5, from which also *v.* 5 is mainly taken.

5. See preceding note.

6. *the heath*] See on xvii. 6. The LXX read somewhat differently from MT., rendering *wild ass* (as shy and difficult to capture). This is probably right. Cp. Job xxxix. 5.

7. *in thy works and in thy treasures*] “works” perhaps meaning *results of work, gains*. This is suggested by the word “treasures” which follows. Cp. ch. xx. 5, where, however, the Hebrew (translated “gains”) is not the same. The LXX (and so the Vulg.) rightly read but one substantive (omitting “works”), and render, from what was doubtless the original form of the Heb., *strongholds*. “Works” is a later insertion referring to Chemosh. So Co. For “work” in the sense of an idol cp. Deut. iv. 28 and elsewhere. The exile of a people was considered to involve that of their deity. For Chemosh’s captivity cp. Is. xlvi. 1 f., and for the latter part of the *v.*, Am. i. 15.

Chemosh] the object of Moab’s national worship (Num. xxi. 29; 1 Kgs xi. 7). If the *god* is powerless to prevent his own captivity, what chance is there for the *people*?

8. *the valley*] the valley of the Jordan towards the Dead Sea.

and ¹the plain shall be destroyed; as the LORD hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, ²that she may fly and get her away: and her cities shall become a desolation, without any to dwell therein. Cursed be he that doeth the work of ¹⁰the LORD ³negligently, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, ¹¹and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the ¹²LORD, that I will send unto him them that ⁴pour off, and they shall ⁴pour him off; and they shall empty his vessels, and break their ⁵bottles in pieces. And Moab shall be ¹³ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence. How say ye, We are mighty men, ¹⁴

¹ See Josh. xiii. 9, 17, 21.

³ Or, *deceitfully*

² Or, *for she must fly: and her*

⁴ Heb. *tilt* (a vessel).

⁵ Or, *jars*

the plain] the tableland of Moab.

9. *wings*] The sense is that nothing short of wings would enable the Moabites to escape before their enemies.

that she may fly and get her away] or as mg. *for she must fly*; but better (so Dr.) *for she would fain fly away*.

10. *negligently*] lit. *with slackness*, better than mg. *deceitfully*.

11—19. See introd. summary to the ch.

11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth*] He hath not been driven from his land hitherto. The feeling of horror at suffering expatriation, as compared with the consequences of a more ordinary defeat in battle such as the nation had often suffered in past time, is well exhibited by these verses.

settled on his lees] Wine improved by being allowed to rest upon its sediment (Is xxv. 6; but contrast the use of the figure in Zeph. i. 12). Its "taste" and "scent" were unimpaired. If emptied from vessel to vessel it would become vapid, without fragrance and tasteless. Something like this was now to happen to the nation by being taken captives.

12. *pour off*] rather as mg. *tilt* (a vessel). The figure of earthenware jars of wine is continued. They are emptied by being tilted on one side, an operation which was performed slowly and carefully, that the jars might be safe and the wine run off clear while the sediment was left. This work, however, in the case of Moab shall be done roughly.

bottles] rather as mg. *jars*.

13. *shall be ashamed*] See on ii. 26.

was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence] Bethel was the southern seat of Jeroboam's idolatrous worship. But Israel found their confidence

15 and valiant men for the war? Moab is laid waste, and
 1 they are gone up into her cities, and his chosen young
 men are gone down to the slaughter, saith the King, whose
 16 name is the LORD of hosts. The calamity of Moab is near
 17 to come, and his affliction hasteth fast. All ye that are
 round about him, bemoan him, and all ye that know his
 name; say, How is the strong ²staff broken, the beautiful
 18 rod! O thou daughter that ³dwestest in Dibon, come down
 from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab is
 come up against thee, he hath destroyed thy strong holds.
 19 O ⁴inhabitant of Aroer, stand by the way, and espy: ask
 him that fleeth, and her that escapeth; say, What hath been

¹ Or, *her cities are gone up* in smoke

² Or, *sceptre*

³ Or, *art seated*

⁴ Heb. *inhabitrress*.

in the worship there misplaced, when Shalmaneser carried them away. Cp. Am. v. 5. Pe. remarks that the mention of Bethel and not Jerusalem in this connexion is a noteworthy proof that this ch. contains a pre-exilic element.

15. *Moab...her cities*] The Hebrew is difficult. Dr., followed by Pe., alters the MT. on the model of v. 18, so as to read, "The spoiler of Moab is come up against him, and his, etc."

17. For the use of "How" introducing a lament, cp. Lam. i. 1, ii. 1, iv. 1.

the strong staff (mg. *sceptre*)...*the beautiful rod*] For these expressions, as implying national glory and power over others, cp. Ps. cx. 2; Is. xiv. 29; Ezek. xix. 11, 12, 14.

18. *thou daughter that dwellest* (mg. *art seated*) *in Dibon*] meaning, inhabitants of Dibon See on iv. 11.

Dibon] now *Diban* (the "Moabite stone" was found there in 1868) stands on two hills. Hence the expression "come down" in the text. It is four miles N. of the Arnon, and thirteen E. of the Dead Sea, and is described as now a dreary and featureless ruin.

sit in thirst] The words are apparently corrupt, but it is difficult to obtain a satisfactory emendation; perhaps *sit in mire* or *filth*.

19. *Aroer*] now *'Ara'ir*, not to be confounded with the Aroer of Num. xxxii. 34, a Gadite city, or with an Aroer belonging to Judah (1 Sam. xxx. 28). The Aroer of the text was a few miles S.W. of Dibon. Mesha records on the "Moabite stone" that he "built (i.e. restored) the city and made the road over the Arnon."

20—28. See introd. summary to the ch.

20—24. The metrical arrangement begun in v. 17 ends in the middle of v. 20. From "tell ye it" onwards to the end of v. 24 is in all probability a later addition. Of the places not already mentioned in the ch. the position of some is quite unknown.

done? Moab is put to shame; for it is ¹broken down: ²⁰ howl and cry; tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is laid waste. And judgement is come upon ²the plain country; upon ²¹ Holon, and upon Jahzah, and upon Mephaath; and upon ²² Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim; and ²³ upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon; and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all ²⁴ the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. The horn of ²⁵ Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the LORD. Make ye him drunken; for he magnified himself against ²⁶ the LORD: and Moab shall wallow in his vomit, and he

¹ Or, *dismayed*² See ver. 8.20. *broken down*] See on v. 1.*in Arnon*] rather, **by the Arnon**, i.e. on its banks.21. *the plain country*] See v. 8.*Holon*] not known. It is not the H. near Hebron of Josh. xv. 51, xxi. 15.*Jahzah*] one of the Levitical cities (the Jahaz of Josh. xxi. 36). There Moses defeated Sihon (Num. xxi. 23).*Mephaath*] also a Levitical city (Josh. xxi. 37). Both M. and Jahzah were in Reuben's territory.22. *Dibon*] See on v. 18.*Nebo*] See on v. 1.*Beth-diblathaim*] lit. *house of two figs*. Some identify it with Almondiblathaim of Num. xxxiii. 46, but this is doubtful.23. *Kiriathaim*] See on v. 1.*Beth-gamul*] now *Umm el Jemâl*, S. of Medeba.*Beth-meon*] the B. of Num. xxxii. 36; Ezek. xxv. 9; called Bethbaal-meon in Josh. xiii. 17 and on the Moabite stone.24. *Kerioth*] This may be another name for Ar of Moab (Num. xxi. 28). See on Am. ii. 2, C.B. Both nouns have *city* for their primary sense.*Bozrah*] probably the Bezer of Deut. iv. 43; Josh. xx. 8, xxi. 36. The B. of xlix. 13 was in Edom.25. The *horn* is an emblem of strength, the *arm* of authority. For the former see Ps. lxxv. 4, 5, 10, for the latter ch. xvii. 5.

26, 27. Probably post-Jeremianic.

26. *Make ye him drunken*] For the metaphor of drunkenness see on ch. xxv. 15.*he magnified himself against the LORD*] He resisted Reuben in his occupation of the territory which the Lord had assigned him, but also in much more recent times. See e.g. 2 Kgs xxiv. 2.*wallow*] or, *splash into*.

27 also shall be in derision. For was not Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves? for as often as 28 thou speakest of him, thou waggest the head. O ye inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock; and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the 29 hole's mouth. ¹We have heard of the pride of Moab, *that* he is very proud; his loftiness, and his pride, and his 30 arrogancy, and the haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, saith the LORD, that it is nought; his boastings have 31 wrought nothing. ²Therefore will I howl for Moab; yea, I

¹ See Is. xvi. 6.

² See Is. xv. 5, xvi. 7, 11.

he also shall be in derision] just as he derided Israel.

27. *was he found among thieves?*] i.e. Thou couldst not, O Moab, have treated him with more contempt, hadst thou caught him in the act of stealing. Cp. ii. 26.

waggest the head] in scorn. Cp. Ps. lxiv. 8; Matt. xxvii. 39.

28. *dwell in the rock*] See on iv. 29.

in the sides of the hole's mouth] The expression is peculiar and probably corrupt, but the figure is plain. See Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, p. 215, for mention of the many fissures in the rocky sides of the defiles in Palestine. Cp. Ca. ii. 14.

29—39. See introd. summary to the ch. The passage may contain some Jeremican matter, but on the whole is late (see also on vv. 37, 38) and borrowed to a large extent from Is. xv., xvi. (chs. which are perhaps earlier than Isaiah's time and republished by him. See Skinner, C.B. *ad loc.*).

29, 30. Expanded from Is. xvi. 6. For pride as a characteristic of Moab cp. Is. xxv. 11; Zeph. ii. 8—10.

30. *I know his wrath*] The Lord corroborates the assertion of the prophet in the former verse.

that it is nought...nothing] rather, as Dr. *his boastings are untruth; they do untruth.*

31. Based on Is. xvi. 7, but the influence of the first person in v. 9 there ("I will, etc.") has led here to the prophet's grief for Moab being represented as caused by her pride.

will I howl] In the corresponding passage in Isaiah it is first the country that mourns for itself, v. 7, and only later, v. 9, the prophet also expresses grief.

For "the men of" we should probably read, as in Isaiah, *raisin-cakes of Kir-heres*. They were made of a mixture of raisins and meal. Cp. Hos. iii. 1. The two words in the original resemble each other. Kir-heres was probably the modern Kerak, eighteen miles S. of the Arnon and eight miles E. of the Dead Sea; a strong fortress on a steep hill surrounded by ravines.

will cry out for all Moab: for the men of Kir-heres shall they mourn. With more than the weeping of Jazer will I ³² weep for thee, ¹O vine of Sibmah: thy branches passed over the sea, they reached even to the sea of Jazer: upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage the spoiler is fallen. ²And gladness and joy is taken away, from the fruitful field ³³ and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to cease from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; the shouting shall be no shouting. ³From the cry of Hesh- ³⁴bon even unto Elealeh, even unto Jahaz have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim, ⁴to Eglath-shelishiyah: for the waters of Nimrim also shall become

¹ See Is. xvi. 8, 9.

² See Is. xvi. 10.

³ See Is. xv. 4, &c.

⁴ Or, as *an heifer of three years old*

32. Based on Is. xvi. 8 f.

With more than the weeping of Jazer] over its ruins, and wasted vineyards. But, by the slightest alteration of MT., we can obtain the reading in Is., viz. *with the weeping of Jazer* (so too LXX).

O vine of Sibmah] Sibmah was two and a half miles W.N.W., and Jazer was ten miles N. of Heshbon. The grapes of the region of Heshbon are still said to be excellent.

thy branches] thy **tendrils**.

over the sea] to the W. shore of the Dead Sea. A hyperbolic metaphor to express the great luxuriance of Sibmah's vines.

the sea of Jazer] "Sea" is an accidental repetition from the previous clause.

thy vintage] Isaiah, whose word differs only by a single letter, has "thy harvest."

the spoiler] Isaiah has "a shouting."

33. This v. is taken with modifications from Is. xvi. 10.

And gladness...Moab] probably genuine. From "and I have caused" to the end of v. 34 seems again an expansion.

none shall tread with shouting] read rather, with Isaiah, *no treader shall tread*.

the shouting shall be no shouting] The Hebrew noun is used for both the joyous shout of the grape-treaders and for a battle-cry. Thus the clause means that the former shall be transformed into the latter. Cp. xxv. 30.

34. Abbreviated from Is. xv. 4—6. The first words need emendation; "How criest thou, O H. and El." (Gi.), or "Crying are H. and El." (Du.). Elealeh according to Conder (HBD.) was about a mile N. of Heshbon. For the other towns see notes above.

Eglath-shelishiyah] mg. much less suitably, as *an heifer of three years old*. The Hebrew apparently means *the third Eglath*, i.e. as distinct

35 ¹desolate. Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high place, and him that
 36 burneth incense to his gods. Therefore mine heart soundeth for Moab like pipes, and mine heart soundeth like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: therefore the abundance that he hath
 37 gotten is perished. For every head is bald, and every beard clipped: upon all the hands are cuttings, and upon the
 38 loins sackcloth. On all the housetops of Moab and in the streets thereof there is lamentation every where: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the
 39 LORD. How is it broken down! ²*how* do they howl! how hath Moab turned the back with shame! so shall Moab become a derision and a dismaying to all that are round
 40 about him. For thus saith the LORD: Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread out his wings against Moab.

¹ Heb. *desolations*.

² Or, *how! ye!*

from two other neighbouring Eglaths. Pe. compares "the three Strettons which are close together, Little Stretton, Church Stretton, and All Stretton."

Nimrim] probably the modern *Wady Numeirah* at the S.E. end of the Dead Sea.

desolate] lit. *desolations*. The sources of water-supply shall be cut off. Cp. 2 Kgs iii. 25.

35. *him that offereth in*] This involves a slight modification of MT. which, as it stands, will mean, *him that bringeth up* (worshippers) to. LXX, omitting one consonant, render *him that goeth up to*.

36. *soundeth for Moab like pipes*] Their use was connected with funerals, so that the word is appropriate as expressing mourning. Isaiah's word is "an harp" (xvi. 11).

37, 38. Cp. Is. xv. 2 f. From "for I have broken" (v. 38) to "upon Moab" (v. 44) is either wholly or in a large part the work of a supple-
 37. All shall have the usual indications of mourning. See on ch. xvi. 6.

38. *vessel, etc.*] See on xxii. 28.

39. *broken down*] See on v. 1.

40, 41. The LXX omit "Behold...Moab" (v. 40) and "and the heart...pangs" (v. 41). Both are probably glosses in MT. supplied from xlix. 22, with change of names.

40. *he shall fly as an eagle*] Cp. on iv. 13. The simile seems taken from Deut. xxviii. 49, but is used elsewhere (see Is. xlvi. 11; Ezek. xvii. 3). It well represented the Babylonian empire, which "seemed to those who witnessed it like the rising of a mighty eagle, spreading

¹Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and ⁴¹the heart of the mighty men of Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs. And Moab shall be ⁴²destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the LORD. ²Fear, and the pit, and the snare, ⁴³are upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. He ⁴⁴that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for I will bring upon her, even upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. ³They that fled stand ⁴⁵without strength under the shadow of Heshbon: ⁴for a fire is gone forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and hath devoured the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones. Woe unto thee, ⁴⁶O Moab! the people of Chemosh is undone: for thy sons are taken away captive, and thy daughters into captivity.

¹ Or, *The cities are taken* ² See Is. xxiv. 17, 18. ³ Or, *Fleeing because of the force they stand under* ⁴ Or, *but* See Num. xxi. 28, 29.

out his vast wings, feathered with the innumerable colours of the variegated masses which composed the Chaldean host, sweeping over the different countries, and striking fear in his rapid flight." Stanley, *J. Ch.* II. 451.

41. *Kerioth*] See on vv. 20—24. But, because of the parallel expression "strong holds" in the next clause, the word may simply mean *cities*.

43, 44. Cp. Is. xxiv. 17 f. and probably a proverb in frequent use. We cannot reproduce in English the assonance *paḥad vāpaḥath vāpāḥ*. See on Lam. iii. 47.

44. Co. considers "for I will bring...saith the LORD" to be genuinely Jeremianic.

the year of their visitation] Cp. xi. 23, xxiii. 12.

45—47 are wanting in the LXX and are pretty clearly an insertion. The greater part of vv. 45 f. is from Num. xxi. 28 f., xxiv. 17.

45. *They that fled...Heshbon*] i.e. the fugitives of Moab in vain seek help from Heshbon, as it is among the first to be overthrown (v. 2).

midst] Read *house*, changing one letter of MT. Heshbon is meant, as the old capital (Num. xxi. 26; Deut. ii. 26). The Moabites now are to recover it, after it had been held successively by Sihon and the Israelites.

corner] rather, *the temples of the head*. See on ix. 25.

the tumultuous ones] lit. sons of *tumult* or *din of battle*, Moabite warriors. See on xxv. 31.

- 47 Yet will I ¹bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgement of Moab.
- 49 Of the children of Ammon. Thus saith the LORD: Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth ²Malcam ³possess Gad, and his people dwell in the cities ²thereof? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard against Rabbah of the children of Ammon; and it shall become a desolate

¹ Or, *return to*

² Or, *their king*

³ Or, *inherit*

47. *bring again*] See on xlvi. 26 for possible genuineness.
Thus far...Moab] an editor's insertion.

CH. XLIX. 1—6 (=LXX. CH. XXX. 1—5). PROPHECY AGAINST AMMON.

Objections have been urged by Gi. to recognising this prophecy as Jeremicanic, while it is of course rejected by many others together with the rest of the prophecies against foreign nations (see introd. note on chs. xlv. —li.). Gi.'s objections, however, may be met to a considerable extent by the hypothesis of later additions to the original utterance. Moreover, as Co. remarks, it is only natural to find a nation so closely connected with Israelitish history included in the list. He himself takes a favourable view of its genuineness in the main.

The Ammonite territory was E. of Jordan, having the portion (Josh. xiii. 14—28) assigned to Gad (itself E. of Jordan) on its W. When the inhabitants of Gad were carried off by Tiglath-pileser III in B.C. 734 (2 Kgs xv. 29) the Ammonites doubtless took advantage of the occasion to possess themselves of that region.

The section may be summarized thus.

vv. 1—6. Has Israel no heirs of its own, that the people of Milcom possess the cities of Gad? But Rabbah shall yet be laid desolate, and then Israel shall recover its rights. The cities of Ammon may cry out for their god and his priests and people shall be taken captive. Glory not, O rebellious daughter, in thy fertile valley or thy riches. Thou shalt be panic-stricken and driven forth. Yet at the last thou shalt be restored.

1. *Hath Israel no sons?*] The style is quite that of Jeremiah (e.g. ii. 14).

Malcam] mg. (less well), *their king*; and so in *v. 3*. He was the god of Ammon. See 1 Kgs xi. 5. The word should be written as LXX, Syr., Vulg. *Milcom* (and so in *v. 3*).

possess] better, as mg. *inherit*; so in *v. 3*.

2. *Rabbah*] now *'Ammān*, their capital city, on the river Jabbok, fourteen miles N.E. of Heshbon.

a desolate heap] See on xxx. 18.

¹heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel ²possess them that did ²possess him, saith the LORD. Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled; cry, ye ³daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth: lament, and run to and fro among the fences; for ³Malcam shall go into captivity, his priests and his princes together. ⁴Wherefore ⁴gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto me? Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, ⁵saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, from all that are round about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth, and there shall be none to gather up him that wandereth. But afterward I will bring again the captivity ⁶of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

¹ See ch. xxx. 18.

² Or, *inherit*

³ Or, *their king*

⁴ Or, *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys? thy valley floweth away*

her daughters] the minor cities depending on her; so v. 3.

³. *Howl, O Heshbon*] Heshbon was a Moabite city (xlviii. 2, 34, 45), and an Ammonite Ai is otherwise unknown. Hence conjectural emendations are (a) to read (with Co.) for "Heshbon" *Ammon* (i.e. its inhabitants), and for "Ai" *the city*, or (b) emending "Ai" as in (a), to read for "Heshbon" (with a considerable change of the word in MT.) *the palace* (Du.). Neither (a) nor (b) however is quite satisfactory.

among the fences] The Heb. means walls, such as enclose sheepfolds. Probably it needs emendation, and Gi., Du. and Co. all recognise that what we expect is something indicative of mourning. Co.'s conjecture makes the least change in MT., viz. *in mourning attire*.

Malcam shall go, etc.] See xlviii. 7 and cp. Am. i. 15.

⁴. *Wherefore...flowing valley*] mg. (scarcely possible), *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys? thy valley floweth away*. Rabbah was on a broad tableland about 2700 feet above the sea, but it was surrounded by hills, so that it could be described as in a vale. "Thy flowing valley" is, however, a strange expression, and in the Hebrew looks like a somewhat corrupted dittography of the previous letters, a conjecture to which the LXX lend a certain amount of support.

backsliding] Cp. in xxxi. 22, referring, however, there to Ephraim. In the case of a heathen people it is less appropriate. Du. suggests an emendation, which gives the sense of *arrogant*.

⁶. *But afterward*] Cp. xlviii. 47.

7—22 (=LXX. CH. XXIX. 8—23). PROPHECY AGAINST EDM.

The fact that there is a great similarity with Obadiah (vv. 7, 9, 10 a, and 14—16 corresponding respectively with Ob. 8, 5 f., 1—4) raises a

- 7 Of Edom. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is

difficult question as to the origin of the passages common to the two prophecies. The two main views are as follows: (*a*) that both are based on an older prophecy, Ob. preserving a more original form (so Dr., G. A. Smith, and others), and (*b*) that Ob.'s original work consisted of his *vv.* 1—5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 *b*, and was not a prophecy of coming ruin, but a description of it as already existent (so Wellhausen, followed by Gi., Du., Co. and others). Ob., as it stands, is evidently (see *vv.* 10 ff.) subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem (B.C. 586). From what we have said above, it follows that the corresponding parts of this section are later, either as an addition to a genuine Jeremianic utterance of the fourth year of Jehoiakim (see introd. note on chs. xlv. —li.), or as forming a part of the section which is wholly post-exilic; the former of these two hypotheses being on the whole preferable. Co. points out the skill with which (on the former hypothesis) the incorporator of the Ob. passages avoided all references (so Ob. 10 ff.) to the overthrow of Jerusalem. The expansion in later times of a Jeremianic prophecy against Edom is *a priori* likely for reasons similar to those mentioned in introd. note to xlviii. 1—10.

The bitterness of the tone in which Edom is addressed finds parallels in Lam. iv. 21, as also in Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Ezek. xxv. 12—14, xxxv. 15; Ob. 10—16, and is no doubt based upon a sense of the closeness of the tie of kinship between Edom and Israel.

The contents of the section may be summarized as follows.

- (i) *vv.* 7—12. Have the prudent of Teman lost their wisdom? Flee into hiding from coming troubles, ye people of Dedan. Ye shall be utterly despoiled. Leave to Jehovah the charge of your widows and orphans. Ye shall yourselves assuredly drink the wine of destruction.
(ii) *vv.* 13—22. Bozrah and the other cities shall be laid waste. The nations are summoned to fight against her. She shall be held in contempt, though erst so proud. She shall be brought down from her loftiness and jeered at, overthrown and without inhabitant as were Sodom and Gomorrah. The foe as a lion shall drive her away. Such is Jehovah's purpose. The far-reaching sound of her fall shall make the earth to tremble. At the swoop of the enemy the anguish of Edom shall be great.

The affinity which existed between the two nations made the unnatural exultation of Edom over the fallen fortunes of the Jews most offensive. See, in addition to the above passages, Amos i. 11, and for an apparent reference to the fulfilment of this prophecy against Edom, Mal. i. 3.

7. If Ob. 8 is a later insertion there (so Wellhausen), it may have been introduced from this passage. Eliphaz the Temanite (Job ii. 11, etc.) has been thought to illustrate a reputation for wisdom on the part of Teman.

Is wisdom no more in Teman?] This and the succeeding questions

their wisdom vanished? Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O⁸
inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau
upon him, the time that I shall visit him. If grapegatherers⁹
came to thee, 'would they not leave some gleaning grapes?
if thieves by night, would they not destroy till they had
enough? But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his¹⁰
secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his
seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and
he is not. Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve¹¹
them alive; and let thy widows trust in me. For thus saith¹²
the LORD: Behold, they² to whom it pertained not to drink
of the cup shall assuredly drink; and art thou he that shall
altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished,
but thou shalt surely drink. For I have sworn by myself,¹³

¹ Or, *they will leave no gleaning grapes; if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough.* For &c. See Obad. 5. ² Or, *whose judgement was not*

are a pointed way of calling attention to the stupefying suddenness and completeness of the calamity.

Teman] a district in the N. of Edom. Cp. Ezek. xxv. 13; Am. i. 12.

8. *dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan*] See on ch. xxv. 23. They are bidden to seek an inaccessible hiding-place.

9. *would they not leave some gleaning grapes?*] The *v.* is based on Ob. 5, but while the general sense is the same, Obadiah contrasts the extremities to which the foe proceeds with the comparative moderation shewn by grape-gatherers or thieves. Here, on the contrary, the enemy's conduct is directly illustrated by the figures employed, and accordingly we should render as *mg.*

10. Parallel with Ob. 6, which (as 8; see on *v.* 7 above) is probably an insertion from this passage, where it fits the context much better; especially if, with *mg.* we introduce, as we should, the *v.* by *For.*

his secret places] the retreats and fastnesses of Edom.

his seed...he is not] For metrical reasons we should shorten this part of the *v.*, reading, e.g. with Co. (who points out that "his seed is spoiled" is inconsistent with *v.* 11), "he is spoiled and is not."

11. A remarkable *v.* and decidedly Jeremianic in character, as compared with the attitude which later days would have assumed towards an enemy so bitterly hated. On the other hand, it is extremely abrupt in the midst of denunciation. We may take it as meaning, Fathers and husbands are dead, but Jehovah will protect children and widows.

12. *they to whom it pertained not*] or the metaphor see on xiii. 12, xxv. 15.

saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse ; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. ¹I have heard tidings from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the nations, *saying*, Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle. For, behold, I have made thee small among the nations, and despised among men. As for thy terribleness, the pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of ²the rock, that holdest the height of the hill : though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD. And Edom shall become an astonishment : every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of

¹ See Obad. 1—4.

² Or, *Sela* See 2 Kings xiv. 7.

13. *Bozrah*] perhaps *Busaireh*, twenty miles S.E. of the Dead Sea. See on ch. xlviii. 20—24.

14—18. These *vv.* are parallel to Ob. 1—4, whence they are borrowed ; see introd. note.

16. *As for thy terribleness*] The text is probably corrupt, but no certain emendation has been suggested. If it stands, we must take the sense to be *O thy trembling*, i.e. either (a) how wilt thou tremble at the greatness of thy fall ! or (b) how will the lookers on tremble at the horror of this sight ! The Hebrew noun is absent from Ob. and is not found elsewhere.

the rock] mg. *Sela*. See 2 Kgs xiv. 7. *Sela* was perhaps identical with Petra, which “lay in an amphitheatre of mountains, accessible only through the narrow gorge, called the *Sik*, winding in with precipitous sides from the W. ; and the mountain sides round Petra, and the ravines about it, contain innumerable rock-hewn cavities, some being tombs, but others dwellings, in which the ancient inhabitants lived.” Dr. See also G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, II. 179. Petra was fifty miles S. of the Dead Sea.

the eagle] See on iv. 13.

17. Cp. xix. 8.

18. *Sodom and Gomorrah*] The comparison appears to be taken from Deut. xxix. 23, where the neighbour cities are mentioned by name (*Admah* and *Zeboiim*). See Gen. x. 19, xiv. 2, 8 ; Deut. xxix. 23. The *v.* recurs in l. 40.

man sojourn therein. Behold, he shall come up like a lion ¹⁹
 from the ¹pride of Jordan ²against the strong habitation :
³but I will suddenly make him run away from her ; and
 whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her : for who is
 like me ? and who will appoint me a time ? and who is the
 shepherd that will stand before me ? Therefore hear ye the ²⁰
 counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom ; and
 his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants
 of Teman : Surely ⁴they shall drag them away, *even* the little
 ones of the flock ; surely he shall make their ⁵habitation
⁶desolate with them. The earth trembleth at the noise of ²¹
 their fall ; there is a cry, the noise whereof is heard in the
 Red Sea. Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, ²²
 and spread out his wings against Bozrah : and the heart of

¹ Or, *swelling* ² Or, *unto the permanent pastures* ³ Or, *for I*
will suddenly drive them away ⁴ Or, *the little ones of the flock*
shall drag them away ⁵ Or, *pastures* ⁶ Or, *astonished at*
them

19—21. These *vv.* recur with variations in l. 44—46.

19. *he shall come up*] viz. the enemy who is to prevail over Edom.

like a lion] Cp. iv. 7.

pride] better than mg. *swelling*. See on ch. xii. 5.

against the strong habitation] mg. *unto the permanent pastures*. See on xxiii. 3. We may either explain here, *homestead* whose surroundings have made it appear *lasting*, or (emending MT. with Du. and Co.) *pasture of rams, or of sheep*.

but I will suddenly...appoint over her] obscure. Co. (cp. mg.) emends to "so will I suddenly drive them away, and their choice rams will I visit," i.e. their flocks shall be seized, as the end of the *v.* suggests. The flock is the people and the shepherd their ruler. Cp. xxv. 34 ff.

appoint me a time] i.e. claim the power of protesting against God's decision. Cp. Job ix. 19.

20. *they shall drag...of the flock*] mg. is scarcely intelligible. The figure is that of dogs or other fierce beasts seizing the most helpless of the sheep. Cp. xv. 3. But Du. followed by Co. understands the meaning to be that shepherd lads (instead of "little ones of the flock") shall be dragged away.

habitation] homestead. See on v. 19.

22. Cp. xlviii. 40.

the mighty men of Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

- 23 Of Damascus. Hamath is ashamed, and Arpad; for they have heard evil tidings, they are melted away: there is
 24 ¹sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet. Damascus is waxed feeble, she turneth herself to flee, and trembling hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her, as of a
 25 woman in travail. How is the city of praise not forsaken,
 26 the city of my joy? Therefore her young men shall fall in

¹ Or, *care*

23—27 (=LXX. CH. XXX. 12—16). PROPHECY AGAINST DAMASCUS.

This section is rejected even by some commentators (e.g. Co.) who admit portions of chs. xlvi.—li. as genuine. The main objection adduced is the emphasis laid on Hamath and Arpad (v. 23), combined with the absence of these two cities from the vision in ch. xxv. 18 ff. Still this hardly justifies us in dismissing the whole section as later than Jeremiah's time, as vv. 26 and 27 may easily be an addition to the original form, the former as borrowed from l. 30, where it fits better, the latter as closely connected with the refrain, Am. i. 4, 10, 12, 14, ii. 5.

The section may be summarized thus. Hamath and Arpad are terror-stricken. Damascus turns in alarm to flee. She is empty of succour. Her warriors within her are fallen, and Benhadad's palaces shall be burnt.

23. *Damascus*] Damascus was for a long time held by a powerful dynasty of kings, who reduced the other cities under their own sway.

Hamath] Hama, on the Orontes, 110 miles N. of Damascus.

Arpad] Tell-Erfad, 95 miles N. of Hamath, and often mentioned (e.g. 2 Kgs xviii. 34, xix. 13; Is. x. 9) along with it. Both names occur frequently on Assyrian monuments.

sorrow (mg. care) on the sea] The mention of "sea" (perhaps arising from the influence of Is. lvii. 20) is quite unsuitable topographically to this context. Co. emends to "they are melted away there from care." But Dr.'s emendation is better, viz. *because of care, like the sea, they cannot rest.*

25. *not forsaken*] The negative quite reverses the sense we should expect. Accordingly Du. and Co., emending the MT., render respectively, "Woe to her!" and "Woe to me!" continuing, "For the city of praise is forsaken."

the city of my joy] We should probably, with several Versions, omit the pronoun, and so put the words in the mouth of the prophet, and not of an inhabitant of the doomed city.

her streets, and all the men of war shall be brought to silence in that day, saith the LORD of hosts. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

Of Kedar, and of the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote.

Thus saith the LORD: Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the children of the east. Their tents and their flocks shall they take; they shall carry away for themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels: and they shall cry unto them, Terror on every side. Flee ye, wander far

26, 27. See introd. note. "Therefore" (v. 26) is quite unsuitable here, while fitting the connexion in l. 30.

27. *I will kindle a fire*] Cp. Num. xxi. 28; Deut. xxxii. 22. Benhadad (son of Hadad) was the name of several kings of Syria. *palaces*] See on vi. 5.

28—33 (=LXX. CH. XXX. 6—11). PROPHECY AGAINST KEDAR AND HAZOR.

28—33. This utterance, like the last, is rejected by Gi. and Co., though accepted, at any rate as containing a genuine element, by Kuenen, Erbt, and others. As elsewhere in these oracles, there have doubtless been later additions (see on 31 f.); but the reference to Dedan and Tema, tribes in the N. of Arabia, in xxv. 23, would of itself lead us to expect a prophecy of this kind on Jeremiah's part, a conclusion which receives support from the mention of Nebuchadnezzar in vv. 28, 36, although this may be due to a writer's intentional projection of himself into Jeremiah's time.

This section may be divided into two subsections, which closely correspond in length, sense, and structure. Each consists of three verses, and the three consecutive thoughts in each are (i) a summons of the enemy to the attack, (ii) a promise of booty, (iii) an intimation that safety would be procured only by flight.

28. *Kedar*] See on ch. ii. 10.

kingdoms of Hazor] Hazor elsewhere is the name of towns in Palestine, but here "is probably a collective term, derived from *hâzêr*, a 'village,' denoting Arab tribes living in fixed settlements or 'villages,'" Dr., as opposed to nomadic life alluded to in v. 29 ("curtains"). Cp. Is. xlii. 11.

children of the east] Arabian tribes E. of Palestine.

29. *curtains*] i.e. tent-hangings. See on ch. iv. 20.

Terror on every side] See on ch. vi. 25.

off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD ; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you.
 31 Arise, get you up unto a nation that is at ease, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD ; which have neither gates nor
 32 bars, which dwell alone. And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil : and I will scatter unto all winds them that have the corners *of their hair* polled ; and I will bring their calamity from every side of
 33 them, saith the LORD. And Hazor shall be a dwelling place of jackals, a desolation for ever : no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

34 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet

30. *dwell deep*] See on v. 8, whence the expression may be borrowed. It is less suitable to the wandering tribes of Bedawin here addressed.

31, 32. These vv. are in all probability a later addition, influenced by Ezek. xxxviii. 11.

31. *Arise*] addressed to the enemies of these tribes.

Three grounds of encouragement are given to the invading army, (a) the people have felt hitherto secure against attack, (b) they have no walled towns, (c) they have no powerful neighbours, from whom to seek aid.

which dwell alone] considering themselves immune from invasion. For the expression in this sense cp. Deut. xxxiii. 28 ; Ps. iv. 8 (R.V. mg.).

32. *that have the corners of their hair polled*] See on ch. ix. 26.

33. *jackals*] See on ch. ix. 11.

34—39 (=LXX. CHS. XXV. 14—XXVI. 1). PROPHECY AGAINST ELAM.

Here, as elsewhere in the group, the genuineness of this section is largely questioned. Even Rothstein, who is a decidedly conservative critic on the whole, rejects it. Co. on the other hand maintains that there is in it a Jeremianic kernel, expanded later. Gi. assigns its date to the time when Babylon had been overthrown by Persia. Sayce (HDB. I. 676) thinks that it has reference to the conquest of Anzan (one of the two ruling cities in Elam) by Teispes the Persian, the ancestor of Cyrus. Peake points out that the date assigned to it in v. 34, as differing from that prefixed to the group (xlvi. 1, 2), is itself in support of its genuineness, while the change in the situation in the course of the eight years (between the fourth year of Jehoiakim

concerning Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Behold, 35 I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. And 36 upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither ¹the outcasts of Elam shall not come. And I will cause Elam to be dismayed before 37 their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them: and I will set my throne in Elam, and 38 will destroy from thence king and princes, saith the LORD. But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring 39 again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

The word that the LORD spake concerning Babylon, 50

¹ Another reading is, *the everlasting outcasts*.

and the accession of Zedekiah [B.C. 604—597]) would naturally bring about a much greater interest in Elam, which, though distant from Palestine, was not by any means so far from Babylon and those who had meantime been deported there with Jehoiachin.

The section may be summarized thus. Elam's bow shall be broken. She shall be scattered in flight among all nations, and pursued by Divine wrath till she is consumed, while Jehovah shall rule supreme in Elam. Yet in the end she shall return.

34. *Elam*] now (approximately) *Chuzistan*, a country E. of the southern portion of Babylonia.

35. *the bow of Elam*] For Elam's prowess with the bow cp. Is. xxii. 6.

36. Co. with considerable probability holds this *v.* to be the work of a supplementer, as being an interruption to the order of thought (when compared with the succeeding *v.*) and as suggested by Ezek. v. 10, 12, xii. 14, and also by Ezek. xxxvii. 9.

38. *set my throne in*] sit in judgement upon. Cp. i. 15, xliii. 10.

CHS. L. 1—LI. 58 (=LXX. CHS. XXVII., XXVIII.). PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON.

This long and vehement prophecy, though forming a member of the group with which we have been dealing (see introd. note on chs. xlv. —li.), stands in a somewhat different position in view of the fact that recent commentators are virtually unanimous in holding it to be a composition of later date, even if it contain some, at most

concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

2 Declare ye among the nations and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken,

very slight, Jeremianic elements. It claims (li. 59 f.) to belong to the fourth year of Zedekiah (B.C. 594). Against this view there are to be urged four weighty considerations: (a) the historical situation which it presupposes is of a much later time: the people are exiles (l. 4 f., 17, li. 34), the Temple has been destroyed (l. 28—end, li. 11, 51); (b) the writer here emphasizes the speedy overthrow of Babylon, whereas at the date mentioned (see chs. xxvii.—xxix.) Jeremiah was maintaining the falsity of this same view against the prophets who urged it, and was advising the exiles to settle contentedly, as the captivity would last seventy years (xxv. 11, xxix. 10); (c) the joy with which the writer here contemplates the destruction of Babylon is quite at variance with Jeremiah's often repeated conviction that the Chaldaeans were the divinely appointed agents for visiting upon his countrymen the punishment of their sins; (d) the utterly disproportionate length and constant repetitions (e.g. l. 3, 9, 25, 41, li. 1 f., 25; l. 8, li. 6, 45, 50). The chs. contain no doubt a considerable amount of phraseology which reminds us of earlier portions of the Book, but it is to be noted that such portions include some passages which we have recognised to be from later hands than Jeremiah's. Thus all that we can infer is that the author was familiar with the writings ascribed in his day to Jeremiah. The date would naturally appear to be when the fall of Babylon at the hands of the Persians was imminent, an event which occurred B.C. 538. Peake, however, holds that the prophecy, as apparently dependent on such passages as Is. xiii. 1—xiv. 23 and xl.—lv., which belong to that time, should be placed later, and is intended, by its anticipations of speedy vengeance, to meet the difficulties of those who were perplexed by the fact that Babylon was not really destroyed for several generations after the time of Cyrus.

The lack of arrangement and the frequent repetitions above mentioned preclude the construction of anything like a satisfactory summarization of the contents. Conspicuous thoughts are:

Babylon is a golden cup, from which all the nations have been forced to drink the wine of God's wrath (li. 7); God brings forth from His armoury the weapons of His indignation for her destruction (l. 25); she shall be laid waste and overwhelmed by the multitude of her invaders (li. 41 ff.).

We may add that there is no clear indication of metrical arrangement in these chs.

2. *and set up a standard; publish*] The LXX omit. Cp. for the "standard" Is. xiii. 2 (R.V. "ensign") as the probable origin of the expression here. It was to be a signal either to attract attention or as a point of *rendez-vous*.

Bel is put to shame, Merodach is ¹dismayed; her images are put to shame, her idols are ¹dismayed. For out of the ³north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they are fled, they are gone, both man and beast. In those days, ⁴and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek the LORD their God. They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces ²thither-⁵ward, *saying*, Come ye, and ³join yourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.

My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have ⁶caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place. All that found them ⁷

¹ Or, *broken down*

² Heb. *hitherward*.

³ Or, *they shall join themselves*

Bel] properly *lord*, apparently to be distinguished here from Merodach (Marduk), who was the tutelary divinity of Babylon. Cp. Is. xlv. 1, where Bel occurs coupled with Nebo, son of Merodach.

idols] lit. idol-blocks, a term of contempt very frequently found in Ezekiel (vi. 4, xxii. 3, etc.). It seems to have meant primarily something *rolled*, hence a long sacred stone, then a stone image, lastly an idol in general.

dismayed] better, as mg. *broken down*.

3. *out of the north*] characteristic of Jeremiah, but meaning with him first the Scythians and then the Babylonians, whereas the Persians are here meant.

they are fled, etc.] Cp. ix. 10.

4. The overthrow of Babylon shall be the signal for the deliverance and penitent return of the re-united people of God. Cp. iii. 12, 18, 21—25, and elsewhere.

5. *thitherward*] Heb. *hitherward*, shewing that the writer was himself in Palestine.

6. *they have turned them away on the mountains*] The consonants of the MT. should be rendered *on the seducing or apostate mountains*, but the variant (as in E.VV.) is probably right. It may refer to idolatrous worship, the mountains furnishing its favourite seats. But it is perhaps better to make the expression a metaphorical one, and consider mountains to be contrasted with fertile pastures representing safe and pious lives in Jehovah's favour. Their guides have led them to bleak, barren, dangerous regions, where they have lost themselves.

have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.
 8 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the
 9 flocks. For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her;
 10 from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of
 1 an expert mighty man; 2 none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied,
 11 saith the LORD. Because ye are glad, because ye rejoice, O ye that plunder mine heritage, because ye are wanton as an heifer 3 that treadeth out the corn, and neigh as strong

¹ Or, according to another reading, *a mighty man that maketh childless* ² Or, *that returneth not* ³ Or, *at grass*

7. *We offend not*] *We are not guilty*. Cp. ii. 3. The enemy's plea is, Israel is no longer holy to the Lord, and thus it is no sacrilege, though we devour her.

the habitation of justice] apparently taken from xxxi. 23, where, however, the expression is used of Jerusalem. See note there.

8. Having told of the repentance of Israel, and of their sufferings in the land of exile, the prophet now calls upon them to set out upon their return. Cp. Is. xlviii. 20.

be as the he-goats] who press to the front of the flock. So be ye the first of the exiled nations to leave before the crash comes.

9. *an assembly of great nations*] such as Ararat, Minni, Ashkenaz. Cp. li. 27 f.

an expert mighty man] better than the mg. *a mighty man that maketh childless*. In the Heb. the two readings differ by the position of a dot.

none shall return] Rightly mg. **that returneth not**.

in vain] empty-handed, making the reference to be to the return of warriors with abundant spoil. Cp. 2 Sam. i. 22.

10—12. Chaldaea shall be spoiled, because it rejoices in spoiling Israel.

11. *an heifer*] LXX render *calves*, which is better.

that treadeth out the corn] mg. *at grass*, vocalising (with LXX) the Hebrew differently. The cattle were without muzzles when treading the corn (Deut. xxv. 4).

neigh] See on viii. 16.

horses; your mother shall be sore ashamed; she that bare ¹²
 you shall be confounded: behold, she shall be the hinder-
 most of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.
 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, ¹³
 but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by
 Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.
 Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye ¹⁴
 that bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she
 hath sinned against the LORD. Shout against her round ¹⁵
 about; she hath ¹submitted herself; her bulwarks are fallen,
 her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the
 LORD; take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto
 her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth ¹⁶
 the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing
 sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall
 flee every one to his own land.

Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him ¹⁷
 away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and
 last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his
 bones. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of ¹⁸
 Israel: Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his

¹ Heb. *given her hand*.

12. *your mother*] Babylon, as mother of the individual citizens.
 Cp. Hos. ii. 2, 5.

a wilderness...a desert] Cp. ii. 6, li. 43.

13. Cp. chs. xviii. 16, xix. 8, xxv. 9, 11, xlix. 17, with notes.
be inhabited] See on xvii. 25.

14. Cp. Is. xiii. 16—22, specially v. 18.

15. *submitted herself*] lit. as mg. *given her hand*. Cp. Gen. xxiv. 2,
 xlvii. 29; 2 Kings x. 15; 1 Chr. xxix. 24 (mg.); 2 Chr. xxx. 8 (mg.);
 Ezra x. 19; Lam. v. 6. Cp. also the Latin *manus dare*.

16. *Cut off the sower from Babylon*] Agricultural labour ceases, and
 foreign residents flee to their homes. Cp. li. 9; Is. xiii. 14. But it is
 perhaps better to make the reference to be to slaves or hired foreign
 labourers.

17. The people of God are like a stray sheep, driven hither and
 thither and preyed upon by savage beasts.

first the king of Assyria, etc.] in deporting the Northern tribes.

and last...bones] The people, weakened by the captivity of the
 Ten Tribes, have afterwards had the feeble remnant of their strength
 crushed at the hands of Babylon.

- 19 land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his ¹pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the
 20 hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.
- 21 Go up against the land of ²Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of ³Pekod: slay and ⁴utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all
 22 that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in the
 23 land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the

¹ Or, *fold*² That is, *Double rebellion*.³ That is, *Visitation*.⁴ Heb. *devote*.

19. Assyria has already paid the penalty for its cruelty towards the people of God. Such too shall be the fate of Babylon.

pasture] her own fertile country, Palestine. Cf. Mic. vii. 14. The parts of the land mentioned are those which were most productive.

soul] as the seat of appetite. Cp. xxxi. 14.

20. *In those days, and in that time, etc.*] See on ch. xxiii. 5 and cp. xxxi. 34; Mic. vii. 18.

whom I leave] those who come forth at the end out of the long tribulation.

21. Merathaim is probably the Babylonian *Marrâtîm*, the land by the *nar Marrâtu* (meaning *bitter river*) in S. Babylonia. To the Hebrew ear, however, the word suggests either *Double* (i.e. intensified) *rebellion* (so mg.) or *Double bitterness* (the sense which the LXX saw in the word).

even against it] awkward. Gi. suggests (by the substitution of one letter in MT.) to read, Go up to *Elam*, comparing Is. xxi. 2.

Pekod] Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 23. The *Pukûdu* were a people lying E. of the Tigris on the borders of Persia. But the sound would suggest to the Hebrew ear *Visitation* (so mg.) or *Punishment*.

utterly destroy] For mg. *devote* see on xxv. 9 and cp. li. 3.

after them] omit with LXX and Syr. It is a repetition of the consonants (almost identical in Heb.) of "utterly destroy."

23. *the hammer*] For the figure cp. xxiii. 29, and for its application to Babylon li. 20—23. Cp. for the title, as given in later days, Charles Martel (hammer), who was grandfather of Charles the Great, and conquered the Saracens in a decisive battle at Tours in 732 A.D., and Edward I of England, on whose tomb at Westminster Abbey are inscribed the words "*Scotorum Malleus*."

whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare ²⁴ for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD. The LORD hath opened his ²⁵ armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a work *to do* in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her ¹from the ²⁶ utmost border, open her ²storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and ³destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left. Slay ²⁷ all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation. The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of ²⁸ Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple. Call together ⁴the ²⁹ archers against Babylon, all them that bend the bow; camp against her round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall ³⁰ her young men fall in her streets, and all her men of war

¹ Or, *from every quarter*

² Or, *granaries*

³ Heb. *devote her*.

⁴ Or, *many*

25. *the weapons of his indignation*] used also in Is. xiii. 5 of the nations who unconsciously discharge God's bidding in war.

26. *from the utmost border*] better, as mg. *from every quarter*. Heb. lit. "from the end."

storehouses] better, as mg. *granaries*.

cast her up as heaps] "her" meaning the whole contents of the city, including the piled up treasures of grain.

destroy her utterly] See mg. and cp. Deut. xiii. 15 f.

27. *her bullocks*] her choice youths, the flower of her army. Cp. for the figure Is. xxxiv. 7. For the expression "go down to the slaughter" cp. xlviii. 15, and for "the time of their visitation" xlv. 21.

28. *them that flee*] the liberated Jews.

the vengeance of his temple] the requital for having burned it in their final capture of Jerusalem. Cp. li. 11.

29. *the archers*] This is no doubt right, as against mg. *many*. Cp. v. 14.

proud] **presumptuous**.

30. Repeated from xlix. 26.

- shall be brought to silence in that day, saith the LORD.
- 31 Behold, I am against thee, ¹O thou proud one, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that
- 32 I will visit thee. And ²the proud one shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all that are round about him.
- 33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts: The children of Israel and the children of Judah are oppressed together: and all that took them captives hold them fast; they refuse to let them
- 34 go. Their redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, and disquiet the inhabitants of
- 35 Babylon. A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her
- 36 princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon the ³boasters, and they shall dote: a sword is upon her mighty
- 37 men, and they shall be dismayed. A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be
- 38 robbed. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be

¹ Heb. *O Pride*.² Heb. *Pride*.³ Heb. *boastings*.

31, 32. *O thou proud one...the proud one*] Heb. as mg. (*O Pride* and *Pride* respectively), applied as a proper name to Babylon. With these vv. cp. xxi. 13 f.

33. *hold...refuse*] The Babylonian oppressors act like Pharaoh of old.

34. *redeemer*] The Heb. is *Goel*, the title of the near kinsman, to whom according to Jewish law belonged the duty of revenging a murder, as well as that of advocate and general protector. In like manner the Lord is about to rescue His people and take vengeance upon their foe.

may give rest to the earth] All known nations had been more or less troubled by Babylon. Cp. Nah. iii. 19, of Nineveh.

36. *boasters*] better than mg. *boastings*. The reference is to prophets and diviners who promised permanent empire to Babylon. *dote*] The same word is rendered *are foolish* in v. 4.

37. *the mingled people*] foreign mercenary troops. See on xxv. 20.

38. *A drought*] The Heb. words for *drought* and *sword* (differing by one vowel only, *hōreb*, *hereb*) are sufficiently alike to make it quite possible that here as at the beginning of the two previous verses the

dried up: for it is a land of graven images, and they are mad upon ¹idols. ²Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with 39 the ³wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As when 40 God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD; so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein. ⁴Behold, a ⁴¹people cometh from the north; and a great nation, and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They lay hold on bow and spear; they are ⁴²cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea, and they ride upon horses; every one set in array, as a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. The ⁴³king of Babylon hath heard the fame of them, and his hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. ⁵Behold, he shall come ⁴⁴up like a lion from the pride of Jordan against the strong

¹ Heb. *terrors*.
creatures.

² See Is. xiii. 21, 22.

³ Heb. *howling*

⁴ See ch. vi. 22—24.

⁵ See ch. xlix. 19—21.

latter should be read. In that case *sword* is thought to be used figuratively in reference to the stratagem by which the water supply of Babylon was cut off by its assailants; though this seems rather a far-fetched application of the word. *Drought* on the contrary will more naturally refer to the drying up of the many canals by which the water of the Euphrates was distributed throughout the whole country for drainage and irrigation as well as for commercial purposes. Cp. li. 13; Ps. cxxxvii. 1.

they are mad upon idols] rather, **through idols do they make themselves mad.** "Idols," lit. as mg. *terrors*, the grotesque objects by which heathen often represent their gods. But there is strong support in the Versions (LXX, Aq., Symm., Syr., Vulg., Targ.) for reading (with different vocalisation) *and of idols do they boast themselves* (cp. Ps. xcvi. 7).

39, 40. These vv. closely resemble Is. xiii. 19—22.

39. *wolves*] or perhaps jackals, lit. *howling creatures* (as mg.).

41—43. A repetition, with the necessary changes, of vi. 22—24, where Jerusalem is the object of the threat. See notes there.

41. *a people*] the Persians. See reference in mg.

from the north] Cp. v. 9.

44—46. Adapted from xlix. 19—21 (where see notes), what is there said of Edom being here applied to Babylon.

44. *like a lion*] no longer Nebuchadnezzar (xlix. 19) but Cyrus.

habitation : but I will suddenly make them run away from her ; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her : for who is like me ? and who will appoint me a time ? and who
 45 is the shepherd that will stand before me ? Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon ; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans : Surely they shall drag them away, *even* the little ones of the flock ; surely he shall make
 46 their habitation desolate with them. At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembleth, and the cry is heard among the nations.

51 Thus saith the LORD : Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in ¹Leb-kamai, a destroying wind. And I will send unto Babylon ²strangers, that shall fan her ; and they shall empty her land : for in the
 3 day of trouble they shall be against her round about. ³Let not the archer bend his bow, and let him not lift himself up in his coat of mail : and spare ye not her young men ;

¹ That is, *The heart of them that rise up against me.* According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Casdim*, that is, *Chaldea*. ² Or, *fanners* ³ Or, as otherwise read, *Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against him that lifteth himself up &c.*

46. *At the noise of the taking of Babylon*] rather, *At the tidings* (viz. that) *Babylon is taken.*

among the nations] no longer merely to the Red Sea (as in xlix. 21).

li. 1. *against them that dwell in Leb-kamai*] Observe mg. meaning, the centre of hostility to Jehovah. See on xxv. 26 ("Sheshach").

a destroying wind] or better, *the spirit of a destroyer*, cp. v. 11, and Hag. i. 14.

2. *strangers*] mg. (with A.V.) *fanners*, which (differing only in vocalisation from the other reading) suits the subsequent verb. So Syr. and Targ. The figure is that of men winnowing corn.

3. *Let not the archer bend his bow, and let him not lift himself up, etc.*] As the mg., when compared with the text, suggests, the Heb. is difficult. It is in fact ungrammatical and probably corrupt. It seems best to omit the negatives, and make the whole v. (as the latter part must be in any case) an address to the assailants of Babylon. If we retain the negatives, the sense will be that it will be useless for Babylon's warriors to attempt her defence.

¹destroy ye utterly all her host. And they shall fall down 4
slain in the land of the Chaldeans, and thrust through in
her streets. For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, of his 5
God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land is full of guilt
against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of 6
Babylon, and save every man his life; be not cut off in her
iniquity: for it is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will
render unto her a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden 7
cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the
nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are
mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for 8
her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.
We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: for- 9
sake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for

¹ Heb. *devote ye all &c.*

destroy ye utterly all] For mg. *devote ye all, etc.*, see on xxv. 9 and cp. l. 21.

5. *forsaken*] lit. *widowed*, cp. Is. liv. 4. The word is masculine, contrary to the figure (e.g. ii. 2) where Israel is the wife, and Jehovah the husband.

though their land, etc.] i.e. in spite of the guilt of the people of Jehovah. The Heb. conjunction, however, is better rendered *for*, and "their land" understood to be Chaldaea. In that case we should (with Co.) transpose the two parts of the *v.*

6. *Flee*] addressed to the Jewish residents in Babylon. Cp. *v.* 45 ("My people"), l. 6; Is. xlviii. 20, lii. 6.

7. *a golden cup*] In ch. xxv. 15 f., Jeremiah was commanded to make the nations drink of the wine of God's wrath. Babylon is here spoken of under the same figure, as having made all the nations drunk, but the wine in this case, as the epithet "golden" suggests, denotes the influence for evil which her brilliance and luxury have upon the nations. She is called a golden cup from the splendour and glory which belonged to her as an empire. For the N.T. application of the figure see Rev. xvii. 4. See also Nah. iii. 4.

are mad] Cp. xxv. 16.

8. *take balm*] See on xlvii. 11.

9. *We would have healed, etc.*] As the *v.* cannot be taken to express Jewish sentiment, we must suppose it to be put in the mouth of the nations, intoxicated by their share in the splendour of Babylon, and so lamenting its fall and desiring to restore its fortunes. Cp. Rev. xviii. 9—19, and for Israel's joy (*v.* 10) at the judgement which befalls its oppressor, Rev. xviii. 20.

- her judgement reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to
 10 the skies. The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness:
 come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our
 11 God. Make ¹sharp the arrows; ²hold firm the ³shields: the
 LORD hath stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes;
 because his device is against Babylon, to destroy it: for it
 is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.
 12 Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon, make the
 watch strong, set the watchmen, prepare the ambushes:
 for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he
 13 spake concerning the inhabitants of Babylon. O thou that
 dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine
 14 end is come, the measure of thy ⁴covetousness. The LORD
 of hosts hath sworn by himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee

¹ Or, *bright* Heb. *clean*.

² Heb. *fill*.

³ Or, *suits of armour*

⁴ Or, *dishonest gain*

her judgement] i.e. her punishment.

10. *hath brought forth our righteousness*] hath made known the justice of our cause (by our enemy's overthrow). Cp. Ps. xxxvii. 6.

11. *sharp*] For mg. cp. Is. xlix. 2 ("polished shaft").

hold firm] mg. *fill*. If we retain "shields" (see next note), the latter verb seems inappropriate. Cp., however, its use in 2 Sam. xxiii. 7 R.V. mg. Gi. suggests "polish" or "furbish," but this involves a somewhat drastic change in the Heb.

shields] The LXX vary much in their rendering of the word. Here they have "quivers." For mg. see W. E. Barnes in *Expos. Times*, vol. x. (Oct. '98—Sept. '99), pp. 43 ff.

kings] read *king*, with LXX. Cp. v. 28.

12. Exhortation to commence the blockade.

watchmen] those of the attacking force who were appointed to see that the investiture was thorough.

the ambushes] to attack any of the besieged that ventured beyond the walls; or (better) to take advantage of a sortie to push their way through the opened gates. Cp. Josh. viii. 12 ff.; Jud. xx. 29 ff.

13. *upon many waters*] See on l. 38.

abundant in treasures] conveyed to Babylon from the conquered provinces.

the measure of thy covetousness] better, *the cubit where thou shalt be cut off*. The metaphor is taken from weaving. "The web of thy destiny is finished. Cf. for the figure Is. xxxviii. 12 (where the word for 'cut off' is the same as here)." Dr.

14. *I will fill, etc.*] rather, *Though I have filled thee* (better, *thou art*.

with men, as with the cankerworm; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.

¹He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established 15 the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding hath he stretched out the heavens: when he uttereth his voice, there 16 is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. Every man is become brutish *and is* without 17 knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, a work of delusion: in 18 the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion 19 of Jacob is not like these; for he is the former of all things; and *Israel* is the tribe of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name.

Thou art my ²battle axe and weapons of war: and with 20 thee will I break in pieces the nations; and with thee will

¹ See ch. x. 12—16.

² Or, *maul*

filled) with men (i.e. innumerable inhabitants), as with locusts (viz. in point of numbers), *they* (the assailants) *shall lift up*, etc.

cankerworm] the locust in its early (pupa) stage. Cp. v. 27, where see note.

a shout] the vintage song, see on xxv. 30.

15—19. These vv. are taken almost *verbatim* from x. 12—16. The object of the insertion is to emphasize the powerlessness of Babylon's idols against Jehovah.

16. *his voice*] in thunder. Cp. x. 13.

20—24. Is it (a) Cyrus, as conqueror of Babylon, or (b) Babylon herself, that is addressed? V. 24 seems to support (a), but on the whole (b) is perhaps preferable. The future tenses can as well be rendered as presents, denoting what Babylon has hitherto been accustomed to do as the instrument of Jehovah. This view also harmonizes with v. 14 (while we omit 15—19; see note there), as well as with vv. 25 ff., where Babylon is certainly the subject.

20. *battle axe*] mg. *maul*, a war-club, mace. "The Assyrian mace was a short thin weapon, and must either have been made of a very tough wood, or—and this is more probable—of metal. It had an ornamented head, which was sometimes very beautifully modelled, and generally a strap or string at the lower end, by which it could be grasped with greater firmness." (Rawlinson's *Anc. Mon.* I. p. 458.) For this figure, as applied to Babylon, cp. l. 23.

- 21 I destroy kingdoms; and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces
 22 the chariot and him that rideth therein; and with thee will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces the old man and the youth; and with thee
 23 will I break in pieces the young man and the maid; and with thee will I break in pieces the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break
 24 in pieces ¹governors and deputies. And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD.
- 25 Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from
 26 the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the
 27 LORD. Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet

¹ Or, *lieutenants*

23. *governors* [mg. *lieutenants*] and *deputies*] Cp. vv. 28, 57; also Ezek. xxiii. 6, 12—23. The names in the original are not Heb. but Assyrian, and are often found in inscriptions in that language. The former is applied to Tattenai (Ezra v. 6), Nehemiah (Neh. v. 14), and Zerubbabel (Hag. i. 1).

24. Babylon, after Jehovah has used it as the instrument by means of which to punish other nations, shall now be itself required. "In your (the Jews') sight" is to be connected with the opening words of the v. Cp. Ps. xci. 8.

25. *O destroying mountain*] For the expression cp. 2 Kgs xxiii. 13 R.V. mg. The figure is not appropriate in a literal sense, as Babylon is situated in a plain. The sense must be that she towers in supremacy over other countries. Perhaps Ezek. xxxv. 3 ff. may have suggested this passage.

a burnt mountain] barren and desolate.

26. The figure of stones, which by the action of fire have been rendered unfit for use in building, is continued in this verse. No Empire shall again have Babylon for its centre. Its position as a capital city is for ever shattered, and its glory burnt out.

27. *Set ye up, etc.*] Cp. v. 12.

among the nations, ¹prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz: appoint a marshal against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough cankerworm. ¹Prepare ²⁸ against her the nations, the kings of the Medes, the governors thereof, and all the deputies thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land trembleth and is ²⁹ in pain: for the purposes of the LORD against Babylon do stand, to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to ³⁰ fight, they remain in their strong holds; their might hath failed; they are become as women: her dwelling places are set on fire; her bars are broken. One post shall run to ³¹

¹ Heb. *sanctify*.

prepare] For mg. *sanctify* (and so in v. 28) see on vi. 4, xxii. 7.

Ararat] the Assyrian *Urartu*, N.W. of Lake Van, and corresponding pretty closely to the Armenia of the present day. Cp. Gen. viii. 4;

² Kgs xix. 37.

Minni] the *Mannai* of the cuneiform inscriptions, not far from Lake Van.

Ashkenaz] evidently near the two former, but not otherwise known; perhaps the *Ashguza* of inscriptions. Cp. Gen. x. 3.

a marshal] The Heb. word occurs elsewhere only in Nah. iii. 17. It is commonly connected with the frequent Assyrian noun *dupsarru*, tablet-writer, scribe. But both passages seem to suggest (cp. "horses" in the parallel clause here) that a body of troops is indicated rather than any individual.

²⁸. *Prepare*] See on v. 27.

kings] Read *king*, with LXX (cp. v. 11). Cyrus is meant.

governors...deputies] See on v. 23.

³⁰. Description of the capture of Babylon.

they are become as women] Cp. l. 37.

³¹. *post*] lit. *runner*. The word survives in this sense in modern English only in the expression *post-haste*. For the sense here cp.

"Your native town you entered like a *post*."

Coriolanus, Act v. sc. 5.

First denoting that which is placed (*positum*), it came to denote a fixed spot, e.g. a military post, or a place where horses are kept for travellers, then the person so travelling, and then any one travelling quickly. See *Bible Word Book*.

shall run to meet another] Bearing the tidings from opposite quarters, they shall meet at the king's castle in the heart of the city.

- meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken on every quarter:
 32 and the ¹passages are surprised, and the ²reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.
 33 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor at the time when it is trodden; yet a little while, and the time of
 34 harvest shall come for her. Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured ³me, he hath crushed ³me, he hath made ³me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed ³me up like a dragon, he hath filled his maw with my delicates;
 35 he hath cast ³me out. ⁴The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the ⁵inhabitant of Zion say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall

¹ Or, *fords*² Or, *marshes* Heb. *pools*.³ Another reading is, *us*.⁴ Heb. *My wrong and my flesh*.⁵ Heb. *inhabitrress*.

on every quarter] See on l. 26.

32. *passages*] mg. *fords*, but perhaps we should take it as meaning here *ferries* over the Euphrates.

reeds] mg. *marshes*, Heb. *pools*. The sense is either that the great reed beds which served as defences are burned, or (by a violent hyperbole) that the pools which protected the city are dried up. Perhaps the text is corrupt. If so, "palaces," "defences," "barricades" are suggested as emendations.

33. *at the time when it is trodden*] i.e. made smooth and hard in preparation for the corn which is to be threshed upon it.

34. *me*] mg. *us*, but "me" is best throughout the *v.* as in *v.* 35. Israel suddenly becomes the speaker. For the figure cp. Is. xxvii. 1.

dragon] The Heb. *Tannin* is lit. any great monster of river or sea, e.g. the crocodile (Ps. lxxiv. 13; Ezek. xxix. 3).

my delicates] Israel's treasured possessions. The word is used as a substantive here only in the Bible. Cp. 3 *Hen. VI.* II. 5, where the king speaks of the shepherd's homely curds as "far beyond a prince's delicates." (*Bible Word Book*.)

35. *The violence done to me and to my flesh*] mg. *My wrong and my flesh*, i.e. the injuries which I have wrongfully suffered at the hands of Babylon. But it is possible that the Heb. translated "flesh" may here have the sense of an Arabic word of similar letters, signifying *blood-revenge*, thus making a good parallel with "My blood" in the next clause. In that case we should render *May the violence...and my blood-revenge be upon, etc.*

inhabitant] For mg. *inhabitrress* see on iv. II.

Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold, I ³⁶
 will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will
 dry up her sea, and make her fountain dry. And Babylon ³⁷
 shall become heaps, a dwelling place for jackals, an aston-
 ishment, and an hissing, without inhabitant. They shall ³⁸
 roar together like young lions; they shall growl as lions'
 whelps. When they are heated, I will make their feast, ³⁹
 and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice,
 and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the
 LORD. I will bring them down like lambs to the slaugh- ⁴⁰
 ter, like rams with he-goats. How is ¹Sheshach taken! ⁴¹
 and the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is
 Babylon become ²a desolation among the nations! The ⁴²
 sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the
³multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are become ⁴³
²a desolation, a dry land, and a desert, a land wherein no

¹ See ch. xxv. 26.

² Or, *an astonishment*

³ Or, *tumult*

36. Jehovah replies favourably to the demand for vengeance on Babylon.

her sea...her fountain] either the Euphrates (cp. the word "sea" as applied to the river Nile in Is. xviii. 2, xix. 5; Nah. iii. 8) or, better, the great lake or reservoir, four hundred and twenty furlongs in circumference, made by queen Nitocris (Herod. i. 185), or that constructed by Nebuchadnezzar (see *Records of the Past*, 2nd series, III. 116).

37. *heaps*] "Vast 'heaps' or mounds, shapeless and unsightly, are scattered at intervals over the entire region where it is certain that Babylon anciently stood." (Rawl. *Anc. Mon.* II. 521.)

hissing] See on xviii. 16.

39. While they are exulting over the spoil which they have won from the conquered nations I will prepare a feast for them, inducing a sleep that shall be endless.

When they are heated] referring either to the glow of passionate indulgence, or to murderous ferocity. But Gi. would read *When I am hot* (with anger).

may rejoice] The LXX, reading apparently one consonant differently from MT., render, *may be stupefied*.

40. *lambs...rams...he-goats*] Cp. l. 27; Is. xxxiv. 6.

41. *Sheshach*] i.e. Babylon. See on xxv. 26.

a desolation] mg. *an astonishment*. Cp. v. 43.

42. *The sea is come up*] the hostile army arriving in overwhelming force. Cp. xlv. 7, 8, xlvii. 2; Is. xvii. 12.

43. *a desert*] Cp. l. 12, 40.

- man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.
- 44 And I will ¹do judgement upon Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.
- 45 My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and save yourselves every man from the fierce anger of the LORD.
- 46 And let not your heart faint, neither fear ye for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; for a rumour shall come one year, and after that in another year *shall come* a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against
- 47 ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgement upon the graven images of Babylon, and her whole land shall be ashamed; and all her slain shall fall in
- 48 the midst of her. Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the spoilers

¹ Heb. *visit upon*.

44—49. The LXX omit from “yea, the wall” (v. 44) to “the slain of Israel to fall” (v. 49), but the omission is probably accidental, the scribe’s eye passing from the first “Babylon shall fall” to the second.

44. *Bel*] See on l. 2.

that which he hath swallowed up] the riches of the subjugated nations. Cp. v. 34.

Co. thinks that parallelism requires the mention of a deity, and proposes, with an alteration of MT., to render *the Desire-goddess*, the chief female deity of Babylon. He compares Dan. xi. 37, “the desire of women,” which is thought to denote Thammuz (Greek *Adonis*).

45. *go ye out*] See v. 6, l. 8; Is. lii. 11.

46. *a rumour...a rumour*] Rumour shall succeed rumour, as the years go on, and disquieting revolts shall foreshadow the final break-up of the Babylonian empire.

47. The v. is suspicious; for (a) it closely resembles v. 52 in language, (b) “Therefore” is unsuitable here, while it fits v. 52, from which it may be taken. Co. for “graven images,” mentioned elsewhere in the immediate context (v. 52), proposes to read “rulers,” pointing out that the word is used three times in Is. (xiv. 5, xlix. 7, lii. 5) of the Babylonian oppressors of Israel.

do judgement upon] lit. *visit upon*, as in v. 52. Cp. xi. 22 and elsewhere.

ashamed] See on ii. 26.

48. *shall sing for joy over Babylon*] shall rejoice over her fall.

shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD. ¹As 49
 Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Baby-
 lon shall fall the slain of all the ²land. Ye that have 50
 escaped the sword, go ye, stand not still; remember the
 LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.
 We are ashamed, because we have heard reproach; con- 51
 fusion hath covered our faces: for strangers are come into
 the sanctuaries of the LORD's house. Wherefore, behold, 52
 the days come, saith the LORD, that I will do judgement
 upon her graven images; and through all her land the
 wounded shall groan. Though Babylon should mount up 53
 to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her
 strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the
 LORD. The sound of a cry from Babylon, and of great 54
 destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! for the LORD 55
 spoileth Babylon, and destroyeth out of her the great voice;
 and their waves roar like many waters, the noise of their
 voice is uttered: for the spoiler is come upon her, even 56
 upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, their bows
 are broken in pieces: for the LORD is a God of recom-
 pences, he shall surely requite. And I will make drunk 57

¹ Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and at &c.*

² Or, *earth*

49. *As Babylon...so at, etc.*] better, as mg. *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and at, etc.*, or, repeating a Heb. consonant, *for the slain of Israel*. The ground for Babylon's overthrow is to be her cruelty towards others.

50. Let those in exile in Babylon, who have escaped death, hasten their return to Jerusalem, while yet there is time.

51. *ashamed*] The exiles answer that they are too deeply humiliated to obey the summons; for foreigners are in possession of the holy sites. Cp. Lam. i. 10 with note.

52. See on v. 47.

53. Cp. Is. xiv. 12—14.

fortify] lit. *cut off*, i.e. render inaccessible.

the height of her strength] the height of her walls.

54. Cp. xlvi. 3, l. 22.

55. *the great voice*] the hum of the city's life.

and their waves] the surging hosts which pour into the city. See on

v. 42.

the noise of their voice] Cp. vi. 23; Is. xvii. 12.

her princes and her wise men, her governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: ¹The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ²overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; ³and the peoples

¹ Or, *The walls of broad Babylon*

² Or, *made bare*

³ See Hab. ii. 13.

57. *her governors and her deputies*] Cp. vv. 23, 28, and for the latter part see on v. 39.

58. *The broad walls of Babylon*] better than mg. *The walls of broad Babylon*. We should, with LXX, read *wall*. According to Herodotus, the outer wall of Babylon was 200 royal cubits (about 373 English feet) high, while it was fifty cubits wide. This, however, both from the nature of the case, and from the conflicting testimony of other writers, seems exaggerated. Probably the height was about 60 or 70 English feet, and the walls perhaps 30 or 40 feet wide, as they allowed of a team of four horses being driven along them. See Herod. i. 178, and Rawlinson's notes there.

utterly overthrown] lit. (as mg.) *made bare*, destroyed, so that the very foundations shall be uncovered.

high gates] "In the circuit of the wall are a hundred gates, all of brass, with brazen lintels and side-posts." Herod. i. 179.

the peoples shall labour, etc.] almost identical with Hab. ii. 13 (referred to in mg.), transposing, however, the words for "vanity" and for "the fire." It appears in both places to be a quotation from an older source, and to express a general truth. We should therefore render (with a slight change of text) by present tenses, *the peoples labour for vanity, and the nations weary themselves for the fire*.

59—64. SERAIAH'S MISSION.

The rejection as non-Jeremianic of the preceding prophecy against Babylon (see introd. note to chs. l., li.) by no means need involve suspicion of this section. Here impassioned denunciation finds no place and the forecast of the overthrow of the great Eastern power is quite in keeping with the attitude of the prophet in xxix. 10 in limiting her dominion over Israel to seventy years. It is true that the latter part of v. 60 identifies the prophecy conveyed by Seraiah to Babylon with the preceding utterances; but see note there. That Zedekiah should himself visit Babylon at the time here specified has been already shewn to be by no means improbable (see introd. note on xxvii. 2—11). Even those who doubt the king's journey thither are mostly willing to accept that of Seraiah, who, as Baruch's brother (cp. his ancestry here with that

shall labour for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary.

The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded 59 Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was ¹chief chamberlain. And Jeremiah wrote in ²a book all the evil 60 that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written concerning Babylon. And Jeremiah said 61 to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, ³then see that thou read all these words, and say, O LORD, thou 62 hast spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, that none shall dwell therein, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou 63 hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and 64 thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise

¹ Or, *quartermaster*

² Or, *one book*

³ Or, *and shalt see, and read...then shalt thou say &c.*

given in xxxii. 12 for Baruch), would very naturally bring a message of hope from Jeremiah to the exiles.

We may summarize the section as follows.

vv. 59—64. The directions given by the prophet to Seraiah when the latter accompanied Zedekiah to Babylon. He was to take with him a scroll containing the doom of the city, and after reading it aloud there, to attach to it a stone and sink it in the river as a symbol of Babylon's approaching fall.

59. *Seraiah...when he went with Zedekiah]* See introd. note. *chief chamberlain]* mg. (rightly) *quartermaster*, lit. **captain of the camping place**. His duty, as in attendance on the king in a journey, was to arrange that matters should be in readiness at the next halting place. The LXX, however, have *commissary* (lit. *ruler*) of the presents. The change involved in MT.'s reading is but slight.

60. *a book]* See introd. note. The latter part of the *v.* which seems to identify this book, or rather *roll, scroll*, with the preceding prophecy, l. 2—li. 58, is doubtless only a note.

61, 62. *then see...and say]* From "and say" to the end of *v.* 62 is probably the addition of a compiler; it is a needless interruption to the close connexion of the preceding words with *v.* 63.

63, 64. For the symbolical action cp. xiii. 1—7, xix. 1—10, xxvii. 2, xliii. 9.

again because of the evil that I will bring ¹upon her: and they shall be weary.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

- 52 ²Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from

¹ Or, *upon her*. And they shall be weary: thus far &c.

² See 2 Kings xxiv. 18, &c.

64. *upon her: and they shall be weary*] The mg. (rightly) puts a full stop after "upon her" and a colon after "they shall be weary." These latter words (one word in the Heb.) doubtless (so Gi., Co. and others) were taken, probably by accident, from *v.* 58, when, on the addition of this short section by the compiler, the words "Thus far...Jeremiah" were transferred to this later *v.* This last sentence is meant to mark off ch. lii., as taken for the most part from 2 Kings.

CH. LII. HISTORICAL APPENDIX TO THE BOOK.

This ch. except *vv.* 28—30, whose source is unknown, is taken from 2 Kgs xxiv. 18, xxv. 21, 27—30, but in some cases the text here has been more faithfully preserved than that in 2 Kgs. *Vv.* 4—11, 13—16 here have already appeared in xxxix. 1, 2, 4—10, where see notes. Particulars relating to the Temple vessels, etc., not recorded in ch. xxxix., are given here (see *vv.* 17—23), while Nebuchadnezzar's charge concerning Jeremiah's safety (xxxix. 11—14) is not found in the present narrative. The aim in adding this Appendix apparently was to shew the fulfilment of that overthrow which Jeremiah had 'so persistently foretold. It may be added that *vv.* 2, 3, 15, 22—30 are not found in the LXX.

CH. LII. 1—11. CAPTURE OF THE CITY.

1. *Zedekiah was one and twenty years old*] So 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11, but, if we compare 1 Chr. iii. 15 and 2 Kgs xxiii. 31 (=2 Chr. xxxvi. 2), we find that, supposing the numbers which we now read there to be correct, Zedekiah should by this time have been thirty-four or thirty-five years of age. An error has somewhere crept in.

his mother's name was Hamutal] or Hamital, the other reading of MT. both here, and in 2 Kgs. Zedekiah was thus brother of Jehoahaz but half-brother of Jehoiakim (2 Kgs xxiii. 31, 36).

his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his 4 reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about. So the city 5 was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, 6 the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then a breach was 7 made in the city, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about:) and they went by the way of the Arabah. But the army of 8 the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took the king, and carried 9 him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; and he ¹gave judgement upon him. And the 10 king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his

¹ Heb. *spake judgements with him.*

4. *in the tenth month*] Cp. Zech. viii. 19 for the memorial fast.

Nebuchadrezzar] the more accurate form of the name. See on ch. xxi. 2.

forts] some kind of bulwarks, or siege-wall.

6. *In the fourth month*] In memory of this date also, a fast was appointed (Zech. viii. 19). The numeral, which was dropped out of the Kgs. narrative, here survives.

famine] described in detail in Lamentations (ii. 19 f., iv. 3 ff., v. 10). Cp. Ezek. iv. 16 f., v. 16 f.

the people of the land] the poorer classes, who had taken refuge in Jerusalem, or who dwelt there.

7. See on xxxix. 4.

8. Lam. iv. 19 f. may perhaps refer to this, in which case the circumstances probably were these, that one body of Chaldaeans followed, and another laid wait in the plain. Cp. Ezek. xii. 13.

9. *Riblah*] See on xxxix. 5.

he gave judgement upon him] For mg. *spake judgements with him* see on i. 16.

10, 11. These *vv.* appear in a shorter form in 2 Kgs xxv. 7.

- eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.
- 11 And he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.
- 12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, which stood before the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem: and he burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even
- 13 every great house, burned he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.
- 15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the poorest sort of the people, and the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue

¹ Or, *every great man's house*

10. *he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah*] omitted in 2 Kgs.

11. *he put out the eyes*] See on xxxiv. 3, and xxxix. 7.
and put him in prison till the day of his death] an addition to the narrative in 2 Kgs.

prison] lit. *the house of visitations*, i.e. of punishment. The LXX render *mill*, of which rendering there is also a trace in xxxix. 7 in that Version; an indication perhaps of a tradition on the subject.

12—27. SEVERITIES FOLLOWING UPON THE CAPTURE.

12. From this to *v.* 23, a part of the narrative which has been summarized in xxxix. 8—10, we find in almost verbal accord with 2 Kgs xxv. 8—17.

in the fifth month] See Zech. vii. 3 for the commemorative fast.
tenth] 2 Kgs has *seventh*. We have no grounds whereby to decide between the two dates.

captain of the guard] See on xxxix. 9.

stood before] See on xv. 19.

13. *every great house*] We must render as mg. *every great man's house*, but the Heb. expression is a strange one.

15. The whole *v.* is omitted by the LXX. The words “of the poorest sort of the people and” seem to have come in from the next *v.* through an error of sight on the part of a copyist. The three classes of

of the ¹multitude. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the 16 guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that were in 17 the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon. The pots also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, 18 and the basons, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the 19 cups, and the firepans, and the basons, and the pots, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the bowls; that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The two pillars, 20 the one sea, and the twelve brasen bulls that were under the bases, which king Solomon had made for the house of the LORD: the brass of all these vessels was without

¹ Or, *artificers*

persons actually spoken of in the *v.* appear to be (*a*) those found within the city at the time of its capture, (*b*) those who had gone out to the Chaldaeans during the siege (see note on xxxix. 9), (*c*) the "residue of the multitude." But for "multitude" read, as mg. *artificers*. Cp. Prov. viii. 30 (R. V. "a master workman"). The original differs by but one consonant from "multitude" which is the reading in Kings.

17. This description of the fate of the Temple furniture is much fuller than that in the Kings passage, and has no parallel in ch. xxxix. For the vessels mentioned in this *v.*, see on ch. xxvii. 19 with note. They were too large to be conveniently carried as they were, and so were broken and taken to Babylon for the sake of the material. For "brass" and "brasen" read *bronze* in this and the following *vv.*

18. *pots*] See 1 Kgs vii. 45. They were used (Ex. xxvii. 3) for the altar of burnt offering.

snuffers] for the lamps (Ex. xxv. 38; Numb. iv. 9).

basons] lit. *tossing-vessels*, to toss (not "sprinkle" as in E. VV. in Lev. i. 5, 11, iii. 2, etc.), the blood of the sacrifices against the sides of the altar.

19. The cups, basons, and spoons are said in 1 Kgs vii. 50 to have been of gold.

candlesticks] See 1 Kgs vii. 49.

bowls] for libations in connexion with the table of "shewbread." Cp. Ex. xxv. 29 in C. B., where Driver suggests "chalices," and Numb. iv. 7.

20. *twelve brasen bulls that were under, etc.*] There appears to be some confusion in the MT. In the Temple as built by Solomon the

21 weight. And as for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a line of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers: 22 it was hollow. And a chapter of brass was upon it; and the height of the one chapter was five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and the second pillar also had like unto these, 23 and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pomegranates ¹on the sides; all the pomegranates were an 24 hundred upon the network round about. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah

¹ Or, *on the outside* Heb. *towards the four winds*.

bases were under the lavers, while the twelve bulls supported the sea. (1 Kgs vii. 25, 44.)

21—23. Cp. 1 Kgs vii. 15—18.

21. *eighteen cubits*] a cubit was about 18 inches.

22. *a chapter*] a capital.

five cubits] From this, which agrees with 1 Kgs vii. 16, we must correct the “three cubits” of 2 Kgs xxv. 17, unless we take the smaller number to denote the actual measurement of the network of the chapter, excluding the pomegranates.

and pomegranates] The Heb. for “network” seems to have dropped out accidentally before these words, while conversely “network” has been retained, and the words “and pomegranates” apparently dropped out through inadvertence in 2 Kgs xxv. 17.

23. In 1 Kgs vii. 20, 42 each pillar is said to have had two rows of pomegranates, a hundred in each, the one above and the other below the ornamental network of the chapters. It is possible that the account here may not be inconsistent with the existence of such a *double* row upon each chapter, though it certainly does not suggest it, or again, one of the rows may have been removed before this period, leaving one hundred on each chapter.

on the sides] The other renderings in mg. shew that the meaning of the expression is obscure. Suggestions are (a) *visible outwards*, i.e. four of the hundred in each row were hidden owing to the nearness of the pillar to the wall of the porch, or (b) *hanging loosely*, i.e. four of the pomegranates were fixed to the network on the capitals, while the rest hung in festoons between them.

24—27. Omitted in ch. xxxix., but cp. with it 2 Kgs xxv. 18—21.

24. *Seraiah the chief priest*] probably identical with the ancestor of Ezra, mentioned Ezra vii. 1.

Zephaniah] See on xxi. 1.

the second priest, and the three keepers of the ¹door: and ²⁵ out of the city he took an ²officer that was set over the men of war; and seven men of them that saw the king's face, which were found in the city; and the scribe of the captain of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan the captain ²⁶ of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon smote them, ²⁷ and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive out of his land. This is the ²⁸ people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty: in ²⁹ the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons; in the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebu- ³⁰ zaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

¹ Heb. *threshold*.² Or, *eunuch*

keepers of the door] Heb. *threshold*. See on xxxv. 4.

25. *seven men*] in 2 Kings (xxv. 19) *five men*.

saw the king's face] were near his person as privileged members of the court. So in Esth. i. 14. Cp. 2 Sam. iii. 13, xiv. 24, 28.

scribe] secretary.

mustered] organised in military fashion.

28—30. ENUMERATION OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CAPTIVES.

28. *in the seventh year*] These *vv.* are absent from the LXX and from 2 Kgs xxv. and apparently come out of a separate document from the rest. For "seventh" we should read *seventeenth*, for in Jehoiachin's captivity the number was far greater than is here specified (2 Kgs xxiv. 14, 16). Thus the *first* deportation would consist of the men of Judah taken prisoners outside Jerusalem in the first year of the siege (xxxix. 1), the *second* (v. 29) of those carried captive "from Jerusalem" itself, but not including those taken into exile after the capture of the city. Of the *third* occurring some years later we have no other clear account, though we know from Josephus (*Ant.* x. 9. 7) that Nebuchadnezzar in his 23rd year carried on considerable warlike operations in the direction of Palestine and in Egypt, carrying off Jews from that country to Babylon.

- 31 ¹And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of
 32 Judah, and brought him forth out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the
 33 kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually
 34 all the days of his life. And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

¹ See 2 Kings xxv. 27—30.

31—34. LAST NOTICE OF JEHOIACHIN.

31—34. Found with slight variations in 2 Kgs xxv. 27—30.

31. *the seven and thirtieth year*] B.C. 561.

five and twentieth] 2 Kgs has *seven and twentieth*.

Evil-merodach] See on xxvii. 7.

lifted up the head] For the phrase generally, but not always, used as here in a good sense cp. Gen. xl. 13, 20.

32. *set his throne above*] in general, *paid him more honour*.

the kings] Captured kings were kept at the court of their conqueror to perpetuate the memory of his triumph as well as for security against rebellion. Cp. Jud. i. 7. So Croesus dwelt at the court of Cyrus.

33. *changed his prison garments*] Cp. Gen. xli. 14; Luke xv. 22.

did eat bread before him continually] was admitted to the king's own table. Cp. 2 Sam. ix. 7, xix. 33. So this privilege was accorded to Democêdês the Greek physician after his cure of Darius (Herod. III. 132).

34. *until the day of his death, all the days of his life*] The latter of these clauses (absent from LXX) is probably either an addition to, or originally a substitution for, the former, in order to avoid the inauspicious ending with the word *death*.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I.

NAME, POSITION, AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK.

1. The name Lamentations is derived from that under which this Book appears in the Latin Vulgate (*Threni, id est Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetæ*), which is a translation of the Septuagint *θρήνοι*, itself a rendering of the Heb. word *Kînôth*. This word, though not prefixed to the Book, is of frequent occurrence in the Hebrew Scriptures: Jeremiah uses the word three times (vii. 29, ix. 10, 20 [Heb. 9, 19]; each time rendered "lamentation"). It is the title of David's funeral song over Saul and Jonathan in 2 Sam. i. 17, while the corresponding verb is used both there and in 2 Sam. iii. 33. It is also used of the dirge composed by Jeremiah on the death of Josiah in battle at Megiddo (2 Chr. xxxv. 25). The title of the Book in the Heb. Canon is *'Ekkâh*, i.e. *How*, the word which commences the first, second, and fourth of the five songs to which the five chapters correspond. It is in accordance with Jewish custom to name a Book of the Bible by a conspicuous word at or near its beginning.

2. This Book's position in the E.VV., conforming to that in the Septuagint¹ and Vulgate², immediately after the Book of Jeremiah, arises from the traditional belief (for which see *Intro.* ch. ii.) that he was its author. In the Heb. on the other hand it comes in the last division (*Kēthûbîm* or *Hagiographa* = *Psalms*, etc.) according to the threefold classification of the Jewish Scriptures (see Luke xxiv. 44). It is now placed for synagogue use as one of the five *Megilloth* (or *Rolls*, appointed to be read on special occasions³), which stand thus, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.

3. The date indicated by Josephus is highly improbable. That writer (*Ant.* x. 5. 1), speaking of Josiah's death, and referring apparently to this Book, says that "Jeremiah the prophet composed an elegy to lament him, which is extant till this time." He was apparently influenced by the statement in 2 Chr. xxxv. 25 (c. B.C. 250) (see § 1 above) that the dirges composed by Jeremiah and others on that occasion were "written in the lamentations." St Jerome supported this view, and in particular ch. iv. 20 (see note there) was referred to this event and not to the capture of Zedekiah. Both the earliest external testimony, however, viz. that of the Septuagint (see ch. ii. § 1), and the contents of the Book itself, point to the events of which a brief sketch is given in Jer. xxxix. and lii. Many O.T. scholars (e.g. Nöldeke, W. R. Smith, Löhr, Budde), however, consider the chronicler to be referring (though erroneously) to our Book on the ground that (a) it is hardly likely that there were extant lamentations by Jeremiah outside the Canon, (b) it was a natural mistake for the chronicler to refer such passages as Lam. ii. 6, iv. 20 to Josiah.

¹ In Cod. Sin., but in Cod. Vat. and Alex. the book of Baruch intervenes. See Swete, *Intr. to the O.T. in Greek*, pp. 201 f.

² But in Cod. Amiat. (see Tischendorf's edn.) the prefatory note (see ch. ii. § 1) is absent, Lam. being thus appended to Jer., and not reckoned separately. We may add that the same is the case in Origen's (Greek) catalogue of O.T. Books, for which see Swete, pp. 203—230.

³ This Book was read upon the 9th day of Ab, the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple.

4. The five chs. of which this Book consists may be divided into as many parts (viz. twenty-two) as there are letters of the Heb. alphabet. All but the last form acrostics, and begin with the letters consecutively, except that in the second, third, and fourth chs. the order of two letters (*‘Ayin* and *Pē*) is reversed¹. More than one of the alphabetical Psalms² also shew breaks in the strict order of succession of the letters. The peculiar and hitherto unexplained feature, however, in the present Book is that it is the *same pair* of letters in each of the three cases which are thus transposed³. Further, if we take the four alphabetical poems separately, we find that in the first three each of the twenty-two parts (or verses, but note that in ch. iii. each part = *three* Eng. verses) may itself as a rule be subdivided into three, in ch. iv. into two only, while in the third ch. each of these three subdivisions (or verses) begins with the same letter, and is itself divisible into two. In ch. v., although the number of the verses is the same, the alphabetical order is dropped⁴. The above mentioned artificial arrangement, by which a definite rule for the beginning of verses was attained, may be compared with modern rhymed endings, as well as with the more complicated Greek and Latin metres. In such a structure of the poems we may easily discern an additional advantage here, as aiding the memory of the captives to recall them in their distant exile.

5. The structure of the individual parts or members of the first four of these poems is that of the *Ḳinah* or elegiac measure, the rhythm of which differentiates it from ordinary Heb. poetry. Each verse is divided into two parts. The metre, as in Heb. poetry in general, depends upon accent rather than quantity,

¹ C. J. Ball (*Enc. Brit. s.v.* "Lamentations") holds that *Pē* preceded *‘Ayin* in ch. i. also till some scribe altered it, and that he would have done the same in the other chs. but that the sense forbade.

² Pss. ix., x., xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv. exhibit various forms of alphabetic structure; so Prov. xxxi. 10—31, and to a certain extent Nah. i. 2—10, and (in the original Heb.) Eccclus. li. 13 ff.

³ ii. 16 f., iii. 46—48 and 49—51, iv. 16 f.

⁴ Although Ball considers that he sees there vestiges of an alphabetical arrangement.

while in the *Ḳinah* we have the peculiarity that the first part stands to the second in the proportion of 3 to 2. C. Budde, to whom is due a thorough investigation of this metre, shews¹ that it was the measure adopted for the songs of the mourning women at funerals², "a peculiar limping rhythm, in which the second member as it were dies away and expires³." The use of the *Ḳinah* measure was then extended by the prophets to other occasions than the above when they desired to make a deep impression on their hearers⁴. We may add here that Condamin⁵ shews, as a further interesting feature in the structure of chs. i. and ii., that certain Heb. words "are symmetrically repeated in such wise that they form a kind of concentric setting (*inclusion*) for the whole poem, the repetitions occurring in the first and last strophe, in the second and the second from the end, in the third and the third from the end, and so on." Thus, "that was *full* (*rabbāthi*) of people" in i. 1 corresponds to "for my sighs are *many* (*rabbôth*)" in i. 22; "there is none to comfort her...her enemies" (*'ên lāh mēnahēm...lē'ôyēbîm*) in v. 2 corresponds to "there is none to comfort me;...mine enemies" (*'ên mēnahēm lî...ôyēbāi*) in v. 21; "the straits" (*hazzārîm*) in v. 3 corresponds to "distress" (*zār*) in v. 20⁶.

¹ See HDB. Art. *Poetry*, or, more fully, in ZATW. 1882, pp. 1—52.

² See Jer. ix. 17.

³ It should be noted that, at any rate as the Heb. text stands, there are a certain number of verses in this Book which cannot be brought under the above rule.

⁴ See also *Intr. to Jeremiah*, p. xlix. Cp. C.B. (Davidson) *Ezekiel* xix. 1—8 or (Driver) *Am.* v. 2.

⁵ *Symmetrical Repetitions in Lam.* i., ii., *J. Th. St.* VII. (1907), pp. 137 ff.

⁶ Recent works bearing on the question of metre as used by the prophets are *Early Religious Poetry of the Hebrews*, by E. G. King, 1911, and *The Twelve Prophets, a Version in the Various Poetical Metres of the Original Writings*, by Duhm (Eng. trn. by Duff, 1912).

CHAPTER II.

AUTHORSHIP, DATE, AND PLACE OF WRITING OF THE BOOK.

1. That the Book of the Lamentations is the work of Jeremiah the prophet has been the apparently universal belief first of the Jewish and then of the Christian Church from the earliest times until comparatively recently. The Heb. indeed contains no direct assertion of the fact, but the Septuagint, the earliest Greek translation, made one or two centuries B.C., ascribes it to him¹ (as does also the Syriac Peshittā version) in a note prefixed to the first ch. to the following effect, "*And it came to pass after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said,*" and the Latin Vulgate (A.D. 405) repeats the assertion of the Septuagint, as given above, amplifying the last words into "*and in bitterness of heart sighing and crying said.*"

2. Such comparatively late evidence for the traditional authorship would, however, need corroboration from other sources. It was obviously natural to attribute poems of this character having for their subject the sufferings consequent on the fall of the Jewish State to the prophet who had given frequent warnings of the impending calamity. But on the other hand internal evidence on the whole fails to support Jeremiah's authorship. It is true that there are certain resemblances in detail between the prophecies and this Book as regards language and sentiment. In both we have pictured to us the "Virgin daughter of Zion" (or, "of Judah," "of my people") in her suffering and shame (Lam. i. 15, ii. 13; Jer. xiv. 17). In both the writer's eyes flow down with tears (Lam. i. 16, ii. 11, iii. 48 f.; Jer. ix. 1, xiii. 17, xiv. 17). In both we find a haunting feeling of terrors round him (Lam. ii. 22; Jer. vi. 25,

¹ The book is, however, translated by a different hand, and the LXX keeps much closer to the MT. than in Jeremiah.

xlvi. 5). In both the iniquities of the prophets and priests are the cause of those calamities (Lam. ii. 14, iv. 13; Jer. v. 30 f., xiv. 13 ff.), and so too is the sinfulness of the nation itself (i. 5, 8, 14, 18, iii. 42, iv. 6, 22, v. 7, 16; Jer. xiv. 7, xvi. 10—12, xvii. 1—3, and elsewhere), and the people's misplaced trust in allies powerless or unwilling to aid them (Lam. i. 2, 19, iv. 17; Jer. ii. 18, 36, xxx. 14, xxxvii. 7—10). On the other hand arguments against Jeremiah's authorship are the following: (i) The invocation or expectation of trouble as about to fall on the Chaldeans (i. 21 f., iii. 59—66) is hardly consistent with Jeremiah's general attitude towards them as the Divinely appointed executors of vengeance on Judah; (ii) the last clause of ii. 9 has been thought to indicate that the writer was himself external to the prophetic order; (iii) in iv. 17 the writer speaks of himself as one who looked for aid from Egypt, a thing against which Jeremiah had protested (Jer. xxxvii. 5—10)¹; (iv) the laudatory notice of Zedekiah in iv. 20 is inconsistent with the view of that king expressed by Jeremiah in xxiv. 8 ff.; (v) if Jeremiah had written this Book, it would have been included in the collection, so composite in character, of prophecies which bear his name, or at least have been mentioned in the chs. relating to his activities subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem; (vi) this Book contains, considering its small size, a large number of words not found in the prophecies of Jeremiah; and (vii) there is altogether absent from the Lamentations the sterner side of the prophet's utterances, his vehement rebukes of his people's sin, and indignation at their disloyalty to Jehovah. As regards (v) (vi) (vii) the following considerations on the other side should be noted: (a) arguments from silence are most precarious, (b) we may expect to find in poetry many words not used in prose, (c) after the capture of the city profound sorrow might be expected to take the place of stern rebuke. We may add that the LXX title (see above) might be taken as evidence that the Book was originally attached

¹ Here, however, the writer may merely be identifying himself with the people whose sentiment he is expressing, so that the sense of solidarity, so to speak, for the moment overpowers the prophet's individual reasoned view.

to Jeremiah, and that the present position of the Book in the MT. is probably purely liturgical. On the whole then the arguments against Jeremiah's authorship, although they may well be held to justify a doubt, are not altogether convincing. See further in paragraph 4, and in note on iv. 10.

3. If then the traditional view fails, on the grounds above mentioned, to establish itself, the question follows, Does the Book itself shew unity of authorship, or is it formed by the combination of several poems? While Ewald and W. R. Smith maintained the former alternative, the tendency among modern scholars is decidedly in the other direction, and there is also a fair amount of agreement in details. Thenius, though we cannot follow him in ascribing chs. ii. and iv. to Jeremiah, is yet in agreement with Nöldeke, Cornill, Löhr and (in the main) Budde in making these to be from the same author. Chs. i. and v. are probably of separate origin, while it is now generally admitted that ch. iii. again is from a distinct source.

4. *Date.* The freshness of the pictures which set before us the miseries of the siege, capture, and subsequent condition of Jerusalem suggests that the disaster was still recent. The description is "like the low wailings with which the storm sinks to rest, reminding us how recently the thunder was rolling and the besom of destruction sweeping over the land." Adeney, *Canticles and Lam.* p. 78. On the other hand it has been argued, but not with convincing force, that the acrostic arrangement of the first four poems belongs to post-exilic times. The Book has literary affinities with II. Isaiah (e.g. i. 1 and Is. xlvii. 8 f., liv. 4; iii. 30 and Is. liii. 6), with Ezekiel (specially in ch. ii., e.g. ii. 4, "all that were pleasant to the eye," cp. Ezek. xxiv. 16, 21, 25; cp. also iv. 11, "hath accomplished his fury" with Ezek. v. 13, vi. 12, xiii. 15), and with Psalms of apparently late date (cp. iii. 6 with Ps. cxliii. 3; iii. 24 with Ps. cxix. 57). But these affinities give us no trustworthy criterion to determine in each case which writer was influenced by the language of the other. *V.* 20 has been taken to imply that a considerable interval had elapsed since the commencement of the distress. But it does not appear (so Dr.) that we need place any of the poems later than B.C. 550. Driver considers (against Löhr and others) that

chs. i. and iii. "produce the impression of having been written as near to B.C. 586" as chs. ii. and iv. Löhr, with whom Budde is in general agreement, ventures to particularize as follows: chs. ii. and iv. *c.* B.C. 580, ch. v. *c.* B.C. 550, ch. i. *c.* B.C. 540, while he places ch. iii. as late as *c.* B.C. 325. We should add that Cheyne (*Enc. Bibl.*) and C. J. Ball (*Enc. Brit.*, 11th edn.) assign a post-exilic date to the whole Book, a view towards which J. A. Selbie also (HDB.) inclines.

5. *Place of writing.* On this point we cannot get beyond conjecture. The Book is assigned to Judaea, Egypt, Babylon, by Stade, Ewald, and de Wette respectively. Löhr holds that the probabilities are on the whole in favour of the last-named place, as having produced II. Isaiah and Ezekiel, as well as on account of its connexion with those who brought the historical and legal element of the O.T. canon into its present shape. On the other hand the vivid presentation of the scene of distress suggests the actual presence of the writer in the place which witnessed these miseries.

The tradition which ascribes the Book to Jeremiah makes the elegies to have been written in the grotto called by his name. It is a dark recess in the low hill of grey rock (identified by some with the Golgotha of the N.T.) just outside the Damascus gate N. of Jerusalem, and, itself a solitary spot, commands a view of the whole city.

CHAPTER III.

SUBJECT-MATTER AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK.

1. The subject, as we have seen already, is undoubtedly the capture of the city under Nebuchadnezzar, and the sorrow and suffering which were thereby entailed. Herewith is united both the confession that this has come upon the people on account of their sins, and entreaties for deliverance.

2. Taking the poems severally, we find that

Ch. i. dwells upon the solitary condition and grief of the city.

Ch. ii. sets forth the destruction that has come upon her, and acknowledges that it is because of the nation's sin that Jehovah is angry. It bids the people cry unto Him on behalf of their suffering little ones, and puts words of entreaty into their mouths.

Ch. iii. complains of the bitter cup which God's people have to drink, and yet acknowledges that the trials which are come upon them are inflicted by a Father's hand who has a gracious purpose through all. The writer bids his compatriots to repent and acknowledge their sin. The concluding verses appeal confidently for vengeance upon the enemy. See further in introd. note to the ch.

Ch. iv. describes the reverses in fortune that have been brought about by recent events, and again acknowledges sin. Here also the poem closes with an exultant hope that the enemy shall suffer requital.

Ch. v. recapitulates the pitiful details of their condition, and ends by an earnest prayer for deliverance, resting upon the thought that the dominion of Jehovah is an abiding one.

3. The Book, besides being annually read among the Jews to commemorate the burning of the Temple, is read also each week at the "Wailing Place of the Jews" at Jerusalem just outside the Temple area. "There the Jews assemble every Friday afternoon and on festivals to bewail the downfall of the holy city. I saw on Good Friday a large number, old and young, male and female, venerable rabbis with patriarchal beards and young men kissing the stone wall and watering it with their tears. They repeat from their well-worn Hebrew Bibles and Prayer-books the Lamentations of Jeremiah and suitable Psalms. ...This elegy, written with sighs and tears, has done its work most effectually in great public calamities, and is doing it every year on the ninth of the month Ab (July), when it is read with loud weeping in all the synagogues of the Jews and especially at Jerusalem. It keeps alive the memory of their deepest humiliation and guilt and the hope of final deliverance. The scene of the Wailing Place was to me touching and pregnant with meaning¹."

¹ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, pp. 250—252.

LITERATURE.

Of foreign commentaries the most useful is perhaps that of Max Löhr (2nd edn. 1907), taken together with his articles in Stade's *Zeitschrift d. A. T. Wiss.*, which deal more fully with individual points. From his work the views of Budde and others can be gathered. In English the articles by C. J. Ball (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*), J. A. Selbie (*Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*), and Cheyne (*Encyclopaedia Biblica*) may be consulted, as well as the last-named writer's *Jeremiah* (Men of the Bible Series), and his *Founders of O.T. Criticism*, pp. 356 f., so also Driver's *Introd. to the Lit. of the O.T.*, and Adeney, *Canticles and Lam.* (Expositor's Bible). We may also mention Plumptre in Ellicott's *Comm. on the O.T.*, and Payne Smith (in the *Speaker's Comm.*). Vol. II. of Peake's *Commentary on Jeremiah* (Century Bible) is very valuable. To these we may add A. W. Greenup, *Comm. on Lam.* ch. i. He has also brought out a translation (privately printed) of the Targum on the whole Book.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

HOW doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people ! 1
How is she become as a widow !

CH. I. 1—22. THE MISERIES OF JERUSALEM.

The general subject running through this first chapter may be thus subdivided. *Vv.* 1—11 lament the sufferings which Jerusalem is now undergoing, while twice in the course of this portion (*vv.* 9, 11) the city itself breaks out into a wail of distress, and thus leads up to the second division of the chapter, *vv.* 12—22, where Jerusalem is (except in *v.* 17) the speaker. In that second part also, her suffering is from time to time (*v.* 14, etc.) spoken of as the consequence of sin. The constantly recurring thoughts are, the desertion of the city by its allies, the privations of the inhabitants, and the overbearing conduct of the conquerors. See *Intr.* ch. iii. § 2.

We are reminded of the figure on the medal struck by Titus, to commemorate his capture of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), a woman weeping beneath a palm-tree with the inscription below, *Judaea capta*. "Is it too much to imagine that some Greek artist attached to the court of Vespasian may have borrowed the idea of the coin from the Septuagint version?" Adeney, *Canticles and Lam.* (Expositor's Bible), p. 99. (See *Intr.* p. 326.)

1, 2. Löhr points out as special characteristics of this ch. the writer's yearning for revenge, and also his full recognition of the sin of his own time as well as of earlier generations. *V.* 1 for metrical considerations should be arranged in three approximately equal lines; "she... nations" forming the second part of the second line.

1. *How*] The Heb. (*'Ekkāh*), which occurs also at the commencement of chs. ii. and iv., as well as in *v.* 2 of the latter, and may well have been a word introductory to funeral dirges, has supplied the Hebrew name for this Book, the custom of naming the Books of the Bible by the first word being a common one with the Jews.

sit solitary] as emptied by the departure of the captives, and deserted by her friends, and by God Himself. Cp. this fate as foretold for her in *Is.* iii. 26.

a widow] The meaning here is not, as might be suggested by such passages as *Jer.* ii. 2, that Jehovah was her Husband and has now been

She that was great among the nations, *and* princess among the provinces,

How is she become tributary !

2 She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks ;

Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her :

All her friends have dealt treacherously with her,

They are become her enemies.

3 Judah is gone into ¹captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude ;

¹ Or, *exile*

lost. The point is that her condition resembles that of a widow inasmuch as she is exposed to penury and oppression in the absence of any to protect her. Cp. the boast of Babylon in Is. xlvii. 8.

provinces] This name is used in one passage (1 Kgs xx. 14—19) of the Israelitish districts, apparently those referred to in 1 Kgs iv. 7, and afterwards frequently of satrapies of the Persian empire (Esth. i. 1, etc.), and is used in the singular of Judaea itself in Ezra ii. 1, v. 8; Neh. i. 30, vii. 6, xi. 3. Here apparently it is simply equivalent to *countries*, nations.

tributary] a *vassal*. The original word implies bond-service. Cp. Jud. i. 3, R.V. mg., and for an account of the Heb. word Driver's *Heb. Text of Samuel*, p. 267.

2. *in the night*] The time of natural silence and darkness is made a part of the picture in order to heighten the effect. The absence of the distractions of the day intensifies the sense of bereavement.

her lovers (cp. v. 19)...*her friends*] the neighbouring states, with whom in the sunshine of prosperity she was on friendly terms (cp. Jer. iv. 30, xxx. 14). Such were Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites (2 Kgs xxiv. 2), Edomites (Ps. cxxxvii. 7), Tyrians (Ezek. xxvi. 3), Egyptians (Ezek. xvii. 17, xxix. 6ff.). For these last cp. iv. 17; Jer. xxxvii. 5; for Edom iv. 21 f.; and for Ammon, Jer. xl. 14; Ezek. xxv. 3—7.

her friends...enemies] In the original there is a figure of paronomasia ('*ohābēha*, '*oyēbēm*').

3. *is gone into captivity because of affliction*] The better rendering is, *is gone into exile* (so mg.) *because of affliction*, i.e. the long sufferings of the Jews at the hands of Egypt and Chaldaea had induced many of them to go voluntarily to dwell in other lands. That this frequently took place we gather from Jer. xl. 11, xlii., xliii. This is better than the alternative rendering (*taken*) *out of affliction* (into Babylon), as this would be a lightening of the picture hardly in consonance with the purpose of the writer. If, however, this latter be the sense, the word "servitude" will be illustrated by the "hard service" inflicted on exiles in Babylon according to Is. xiv. 3.

She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest :
 All her persecutors overtook her within the straits.
 The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the ⁴
¹solemn assembly ;
 All her gates are desolate, her priests do sigh :
 Her virgins are afflicted, and she herself is in bitterness.
 Her adversaries are become the head, her enemies prosper ; ⁵
 For the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her
 transgressions :
 Her young children are gone into captivity before the
 adversary.

¹ Or, *appointed feast*

within the straits] distresses, oppression. The Jews have been hemmed in and harassed by their foes.

⁴. *The ways of Zion do mourn*] The approaches to Jerusalem are meant. They are desolate, without the usual throng of those coming up to the feasts.

For the thought of inanimate objects as sympathising with human affairs cp.

“Call it not vain—they do not err,
 Who say, that, when the Poet dies,
 Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
 And celebrates his obsequies.”

Lay of the Last Minstrel, Canto v.

All her gates are desolate] See on Jer. xiv. 2.
her priests do sigh] in the absence of sacrifices, their livelihood has disappeared.

Her virgins are afflicted] They are mentioned as taking part in religious ceremonies. See Ex. xv. 20; Jud. xxi. 21; Ps. lxxviii. 25; Jer. xxxi. 13. It is clear from this passage that when the poem was written, there was no attempt at worship on the Temple site, though it may have continued for a while after the destruction of the city (see on Jer. xli. 5).

⁵. *are become the head*] There may be a reference to Deut. xxviii. 13, 44.

prosper] lit. **are at peace**. Cp. Jer. xii. 1 (“are...at ease”).
for the multitude, etc.] The acknowledgement that Israel's calamities were the requital for her sin recurs frequently in this poem (*vv.* 8, 18, 20, 22).

before the adversary] either driven like a flock of cattle on the occasion of the actual deportation, or possibly (as the writer may be dealing with a time many years subsequent) sold by their parents owing to their extreme penury.

- 6 And from the daughter of Zion all her ¹majesty is departed:
 Her princes are become like harts that find no pasture,
 And they are gone without strength before the pursuer.
 7 Jerusalem remembereth in the days of her affliction and of
 her ²miseries
 All her pleasant things that were from the days of old:
 When her people fell into the hand of the adversary, and
 none did help her,
 The adversaries saw her, they did mock at her ³desolations.
 8 Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she ⁴is become
 as an unclean thing:

¹ Or, *beauty*² Or, *wanderings*³ Heb. *ceasings*.⁴ Or, *is removed*

6. *majesty*] mg. less well, *beauty*. Exhaustion from hunger and fatigue has taken the place of dignity and wealth.

Her princes are become like harts] The most natural reference is to the flight and capture of Zedekiah and his princes, Jer. xxxix. 4 f. Cp. lii. 10. The LXX and Vulg. for "harts" read (with different vowel punctuation) *rams*, a word used elsewhere (e.g. Ex. xv. 15; see mg.) for leaders. But the figure needs an animal which is hunted. Budde therefore accepts the Targ. "stags."

7. The *v.* should, like the rest, be tripartite, whereas as it stands it has four lines. Löhr and others (probably rightly) consider "All her...old" as a gloss. We should then omit the "in" of the first clause. *miseries*] The original word is a rare one (cp. iii. 19), and probably means *wanderings* (as mg.).

desolations] mg. (more literally) *ceasings*. The original word occurs here only. Its apparent connexion with the root whence "sabbath" comes was the cause of the rendering in the Vulg. followed by A.V.

8, 9. These *vv.* in figurative language describe the Jewish people, as having brought upon itself through sin and consequent national humiliation the contempt of all its neighbours, while it is painfully conscious of its own ignominy (cp. iv. 21). The first two lines of *v.* 9 are metrically irregular. Budde's emendation (which, however, Löhr considers too drastic) is to take from *v.* 8 the clause "she is...thing" (omitting "therefore") and place it after "skirts," thus making "She remembered not...wonderfully" to form the second portion of the tripartite arrangement, and omitting accordingly "she hath no comforter" (which would thus become hypermetrical) as an insertion suggested by *vv.* 2, 17, or 21. Observe the sudden change of person in the last line of *v.* 9.

8. *is become* (mg. *is removed*) as an unclean thing] Targ. *has become a wanderer*, but the text is doubtless right.

All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness :

Yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

Her filthiness was in her skirts ; she remembered not her 9 latter end ;

Therefore is she come down wonderfully ; she hath no comforter :

Behold, O LORD, my affliction ; for the enemy hath magnified himself.

The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant 10 things :

For she hath seen that the heathen are entered into her sanctuary,

Concerning whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

All her people sigh, they seek bread ; 11

They have given their pleasant things for meat to refresh the soul :

See, O LORD, and behold ; for I am become vile.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? 12

9. *is she come down wonderfully*] Cp. Is. xlvii. 1.

10. *pleasant*] lit. *desirable, precious*, with special reference to the Temple treasures (2 Chr. xxxvi. 10 ; Jer. lii. 19 ; 2 Kgs xxv. 15). For the whole *v.* cp. Is. lxiv. 10 f. ; also Pss. lxxiv., lxxix.

the heathen are entered into her sanctuary] Those who were forbidden, at any rate as nations, ever to enter into a religious covenant with Israel (e.g. Ammonites and Moabites, Deut. xxiii. 3 f., cp. Ezek. xliv. 9), as part of the invading host have entered the very Holy of Holies for plunder. No worse humiliation could befall a Jew than this.

11. The people have already given up their most valuable possessions, that they had hitherto hoarded, for bread. There is therefore nothing now between them and starvation.

meat] food. Cp. note on "oblations," Jer. xvii. 26.

vile] See on Jer. xv. 19.

12—22. See introductory note. Zion, as at the end of the previous *v.*, now speaks.

12. *Is it nothing to you*] This rendering is precarious. Löhr considers the original commencement of the *v.* to be irrevocably lost. The lit. rendering of MT. is "not to you, etc." So the Syr., while the LXX fail to give any clear indication of their Heb. text. The Heb. letter (*Lamed*) which commences the *v.* is written small, apparently as an indication that a corruption is suspected. Budde's translation

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow,
which is done unto me,

¹Wherewith the LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of his
fierce anger.

13 From on high hath he sent fire into my bones, and it pre-
vaileth against them :

He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back ;
He hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

14 The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand ;
They are knit together, they are come up upon my neck ;
he hath made my strength to ²fail :
The Lord hath delivered me into their hands, ³against whom
I am not able to stand.

¹ Or, *Whom the LORD hath afflicted*

² Heb. *stumble*.

³ Or, *from whom I am not able to rise up*

(obtained by a slight difference in the punctuation of the first word in MT.), viz. "O ye that pass by, look on me and see," is perhaps the best.

13—15. Notice the accumulation of figures under which the destruction of the city is represented, fiery rain, toils of a net, a blocking of the way, a yoke laid on the neck, a sacrificial banquet, the treading of grapes in a winepress.

13. Zion likens herself to one whose inmost parts are being consumed, as with flame. Cp. Jer. xx. 9 ; Job xxx. 30 ; Ps. cii. 3.

it prevaieth against] *it subdueth*, or, in the sense of the cognate root in Syriac, *chastiseth*.

He hath spread a net for my feet] Cp. Jer. l. 24 ; Ezek. xii. 13 ; Job xviii. 8 ff.

14. *is bound*] The manifold sins of the people are likened to a complication of cords, attaching a yoke to the neck of a beast of burden, and keeping it secure in its place. Cp. note on "bands and bars" of Jer. xxvii. 2. The Heb. verb, however, occurs here only, and the reading may be corrupt. The LXX (and so Vulg.), by the slightest possible change in reading the Heb. verb (involving only the transference of a diacritical mark), render "watch has been kept over mine iniquities," obtaining the latter part of their rendering by taking the word pointed in MT. to mean *yoke* ('ol) as though it were the preposition *upon* ('al). We must then, for the sake of metrical division, take "by his hand" in connexion with "they are knit together," and, as this leaves the next line (in the MT.) too short, Budde there inserts "a yoke" before "upon," rendering, "They have come up as a yoke upon my neck ; they have made my strength to fail."

The Lord hath set at nought all my mighty men in the midst 15
of me ;

He hath called a solemn assembly against me to crush my
young men :

The Lord hath trodden as in a winepress the virgin daughter
of Judah.

For these things I weep ; mine eye, mine eye runneth down 16
with water ;

Because the comforter that should refresh my soul is far
from me :

My children are desolate, because the enemy hath pre-
vailed.

Zion spreadeth forth her hands ; there is none to comfort 17
her ;

The LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, that they
that are round about him should be his adversaries :

Jerusalem is among them as an unclean thing.

The LORD is righteous ; for I have rebelled against his 18
commandment :

15. *hath called a solemn assembly*] or, sacrificial banquet. Cp. Jer. xlv. 10 ; Is. xxxiv. 6 ; Ezek. xxxix. 17 ff. ; Zeph. i. 7 f. The festival is not for Israel but for the enemy, and that which is to be celebrated, the overthrow of the flower of the Jewish army.

hath trodden, etc.] **hath trodden the winepress of the virgin daughter of Judah.** For *treading the winepress*, as a phrase to express the wrath of God, cp. Is. lxiii. 3 ; Joel iii. 13 ; Rev. xiv. 19, xix. 15, and for *the virgin (daughter)*, Jer. xiv. 17, xviii. 13 (where see note), xxxi. 4. The expression is used to indicate inviolate security, and Zion (the speaker) here identifies it with the people of Judah collectively.

16. *For these things*] The particulars rehearsed in the last three vv. open again the floodgates of tears.

mine eye, mine eye] This repetition spoils the metre, and arises in all probability from a copyist's error.

mine eye runneth down with water] See iii. 48, and cp. the phrase "to weep one's eyes out."

17. Here the poet speaks, while Zion resumes her lament from v. 18 to the end of the ch.

spreadeth forth her hands] in fruitless supplication. For the phrase itself cp. Ex. ix. 29 ; 1 Kgs viii. 38, etc. The Targ., however, takes the expression to indicate a gesture of pain.

Jerusalem is, etc.] They look on her with loathing, as though ceremonially defiled.

18. *I have rebelled against his commandment*] See on v. 5. The

Hear, I pray you, all ye peoples, and behold my sorrow :
My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

19 I called for my lovers, *but* they deceived me :

My priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city,
While they sought them meat to refresh their souls.

20 Behold, O LORD ; for I am in distress ; my bowels are
troubled ;

Mine heart is turned within me ; for I have grievously re-
belled :

Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.

21 They have heard that I sigh ; there is none to comfort
me ;

All mine enemies have heard of my trouble ; they are glad
that thou hast done it :

Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast proclaimed, and they
shall be like unto me.

Targ. strangely explains the *v.* as having reference to Josiah's defeat and death at Megiddo (B.C. 608).

19. *my lovers*] See on *v.* 2.

meat to refresh their souls] See on *v.* 11. The LXX add (but unnecessarily, and with injury to the metre), *and found it not*.

20. With description of her distress Zion combines prayer, appealing to Jehovah for redress.

my bowels] See on Jer. xxxi. 20.

are troubled] lit. *are in a ferment*.

is turned] cannot rest, is violently agitated.

at home there is as death] As violent death is imminent for those who stir abroad, so even those who remain within are like to die of pestilence. See Jer. ix. 21, and for note on this special sense of death Jer. xv. 2. The "as" (in Heb. a consonantal prefix) is hard to interpret and should perhaps be omitted.

21. The second and third lines are metrically irregular, as failing to fulfil the conditions of the "limping rhythm" of the *Ḳinah*. (See Intr. p. 321 f.) Löhr accordingly transposes "They are glad...done it" and "Thou wilt bring...proclaimed."

They have heard] This verb has perhaps been assimilated to the "have heard" of the next line. If so, by a very slight change in MT., we get an imperative, *Hear thou*. Cp. the imperative "Behold" at the commencement of *v.* 20.

Thou wilt bring] lit. *Thou hast brought* (a prophetic perfect). The day here spoken of is the day of retribution for Judah's enemies. Cp. Jer. xxv. 17—26, in which passage Jerusalem and the neighbouring nations are all united in the same figure, as drinking in common of the cup

Let all their wickedness come before thee ;
 And do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all my
 transgressions :
 For my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

of God's wrath. For the use of "day" in the sense of destined time Greenup quotes Chaucer, *Channonnes Yemannes Tale*, ll. 15 f.

The arrangement of the second and third lines of the *v.* in MT. is metrically irregular. Löhr is probably right in transposing two clauses, and thus reading,

"All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, thou hast brought the day that thou didst proclaim ;

They are glad that thou hast done it, let them be like unto me."

He thus makes "the day" to be that of Judah's fall as foretold by the prophets, and makes the last clause expressive of a wish. It has also been suggested that for "Thou wilt bring" we should read the imperative, *Bring thou*.

22. *For my sighs are many*] The connexion is, I have had my punishment. Do thou then proceed to inflict upon them their share. For the sentiment, as contrasted with N.T. teaching, cp. Jer. xviii. 20ff.

CH. II. 1—22. GOD'S JUDGEMENTS UPON THE CITY. LAMENTATION. SUPPLICATION.

This ch., together with ch. iv., stands on a higher level of poetic merit than ch. i., and the writer is almost certainly shewn by the graphic character of his language to have been an eye-witness of the wretchedness which he paints in vivid colours. As Pe. says, "It is less made up of generalities, and deals far more with concrete realities" than did the previous ch. It is an acrostic, like chs. i., iii., iv., and is of triple character (see Intr. p. 321). The comparatively early date which we may assign to its composition (c. B.C. 580, see Intr. p. 326) fits in with its linguistic affinities to Ezekiel. Another marked feature of this ch. is its coincidences in language and thought with Ps. lxxiv. Cp. *v.* 2 "he hath thrown...to the ground" with *v.* 7 in the Ps.; *v.* 3 "he hath drawn back his right hand" with *v.* 11; *vv.* 3, 4 "he hath burned up, etc." with *v.* 1 ("Why doth thine anger smoke, etc."); *v.* 6 "he hath destroyed his place of assembly" with *v.* 8; *ib.* "he hath caused solemn assembly and sabbath to be forgotten in Zion" with *v.* 9; *v.* 7 "they have made a noise, etc." with *v.* 4; *v.* 9 "her prophets find no vision from the LORD" with *v.* 9.

The ch. may be subdivided as follows. *Vv.* 1—10 describe in detail the punishment sent upon Jerusalem by reason of Jehovah's anger, 11—17 bewail the same together with the cruelty of the lookers on, 18, 19 call upon the city to address herself to God, and 20—22 give us the supplication which she accordingly offers. In this ch. we have not simply a renewed setting forth of miseries, but rather the same

- How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger !
 He hath cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel,
 And hath not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger.
- 2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied ;
 He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah ;
 He hath brought them down to the ground :
 He hath profaned the kingdom and the princes thereof.
- 3 He hath cut off in fierce anger ¹all the horn of Israel ;
 He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy :

¹ Or, *every horn*

viewed now more in the light of a judgement sent from God, and therefore as the consequences of sin. It has close affinity as to subject matter with Jer. xiv. 15—18.

1. *How*] See on ch. i. 1.

the beauty of Israel] possibly the Temple, as in Is. lxiv. 11, or Jerusalem, but more naturally the illustrious ones of the nation (cp. "thy glory" in 2 Sam. i. 19), or even Israel as a whole, once high in the favour of Jehovah.

his footstool] here again the Temple (cp. Ezek. xliii. 7 and perhaps Ps. xcix. 5) may be meant, or the Ark, which is actually called God's "footstool" in 1 Chr. xxviii. 2 and probably in Ps. cxxxii. 7.

2. Löhr restores the triple metre by some condensation and transposition.

habitations] The word is that which is used for the dwellings and pasture grounds of shepherds, and thus refers to the country parts of Judaea, as opposed to the fortresses, "strong holds," that follow.

hath profaned] By their fall the king's princes have been deprived of that sanctity which has hitherto been their character. For the discussion of the origin of this conception of sanctity as pertaining to kings and in a somewhat less degree to all others of royal blood Pe. refers to Frazer's *Golden Bough*, pt. I. 'The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings' (1911).

3. Jehovah has (a) cut off the mighty ones of Israel, (b) withdrawn His own protection from His people, (c) taken the offensive against them.

all the horn] mg. *every horn*, the horn being the symbol of power.

And he hath burned up Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.

He hath bent his bow like an enemy, he hath stood with 4 his right hand as an adversary,

And hath slain all that were pleasant to the eye :

¹In the tent of the daughter of Zion he hath poured out his fury like fire.

The Lord is become as an enemy, he hath swallowed up 5 Israel ;

He hath swallowed up all her palaces, he hath destroyed his strong holds :

And he hath multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

And he hath violently taken away his ²tabernacle, as if it 6 were of a garden ;

¹ Or, *On*

² Or, *booth* Or, *hedge*

burned up Jacob] He has carried destruction into the heart of the nation.

4. Jehovah is likened to an archer (cp. Job xvi. 13), aiming His bow with deadly effect against the goodliest of the people. The metre is incomplete, a part of the third line having apparently been lost. We should (with Löhr) read as the second line, "And hath slain...daughter of Zion."

with his right hand] that which has hitherto been the symbol of His help.

5. *her palaces...his strong holds*] In "her" Jeremiah was thinking of the city, in "his" of the people at large; hence the change in the gender of the pronouns.

mourning and lamentation] *groaning and moaning*, or better (as Cheyne) *moaning and bemoaning*. The original words are substantives from the same root, and occur again (there also in combination) only in Is. xxix. 2.

6. *And he hath violently...of a garden*] The expression is obscure. The natural sense of the Eng. would be that He has taken away His tabernacle (the Temple) out of Jerusalem as unconcernedly as a pleasure booth might be removed from a garden (cp. Job xxvii. 18). But *as a garden* is a better rendering of the Heb., and so we get the thought that the Temple was destroyed and broken up with as much ease as a garden that had failed to please its owner. The fact that the LXX has *as a vine* (Heb. *gephen*) while the Heb. as it stands has *gan*, *a garden*, has led to the conjecture (so de Hoop Scheffer) that *gannab*, *a thief*, was the original reading. On this hypothesis the MT. might easily have been altered, if considered as an indecorous comparison, into

- He hath destroyed his place of assembly :
 The LORD hath caused ¹solemn assembly and sabbath to be forgotten in Zion,
 And hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.
- 7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary,
 He hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces :
 They have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn assembly.
- 8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion ;

¹ Or, *appointed feast*

one of the other two words. If we accept Scheffer's view we must understand that Jehovah has broken through the *hedge* (see mg.) which protected Zion, as a thief would make his way through a hedge in order to steal property which it protected. Secrecy rather than violence, however, is what we associate with theft (cp. Jer. xlix. 9), and so far the comparison is inappropriate.

place of assembly] The same word in the Heb. as that which is immediately afterwards rendered *solemn assembly* (mg. *appointed feast*) which is its usual sense, although the former one occurs Ps. lxxiv. 8. The occurrence of the same word in somewhat different senses in two consecutive clauses is suspicious, but no very satisfactory emendation has been suggested.

the king] associated here with the priest by virtue of his theocratic character. Cp. iv. 20.

7. *her palaces*] As this word is nowhere else applied to the Temple, it seems best (though parallelism of clauses suggests otherwise) to give the expression its natural sense, as in v. 5. Although the text seems to have suffered some corruption, no correction that can claim to be self-evident has appeared.

a noise] the exultant uproar of the enemy's triumphant soldiery is likened to the tumultuous character belonging to primitive Semitic and other cults. See W. R. Smith (*Religion of the Semites*, 1894, p. 261), who deduces from this v. that "even at Jerusalem the worship must have been boisterous indeed." The Targ. identifies it with the sound made in praying at the passover. The v. implies that the writer is of an age to be familiar with pre-exilic worship.

8, 9. The walls were broken down and the gates removed (2 Kgs xxv. 10 ; Jer. lii. 14) to preclude rebellion. Cp. Ezra iv. 12 ff.

He hath stretched out the line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from ¹destroying:

But he hath made the rampart and wall to lament; they languish together.

Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars:

Her king and her princes are among the nations where the law is not;

Yea, her prophets find no vision from the LORD.

The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, they keep silence;

They have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth:

The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled,

II

¹ Heb. *swallowing up*.

8. *stretched out the line*] i.e. marked for destruction. Cp. 2 Kgs xxi. 13; Is. xxxiv. 11; Am. vii. 7 ff.

destroying] lit. as mg. *swallowing up*.

they languish together] For the personification of rampart and wall cp. v. 18 and Jer. xiv. 2.

9. *Her gates, etc.*] The Targ. preserves a tradition that the enemy slew a pig and sprinkled the blood over them.

destroyed and broken] One of the verbs must be struck out for the sake of metre.

Her king...from the LORD] We should (correcting the Mass. punctuation) read the latter part of the second line as an independent clause, "*the law is not.*" Three classes are spoken of, all of whom circumstances exclude from their proper functions, (i) the king and princes are in exile, (ii) so are the priests, (iii) the prophets in captivity have no message. Cp. Ps. lxxiv. 9, Ezek. vii. 26 f. We must therefore (correcting the Mass. punctuation) read the latter part of the second line, *there is no priestly direction*. See on Jer. xviii. 18.

10. In this and the two following vv. we have the picture of the state of things in Jerusalem after the king, etc. (v. 9) had been carried into exile. The half-starving people are left behind in their sufferings.

They have cast up dust upon their heads] Cp. 2 Sam. xiii. 19; Job ii. 12.

sackcloth] Cp. Neh. ix. 1.

11—17. Lament over Zion's exposure to the mockery of her enemies.

11. *my bowels are troubled*] See on ch. i. 20.

My liver is poured upon the earth, for the ¹destruction of the daughter of my people;

Because the young children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?

When they swoon as the wounded in the streets of the city,
When their soul is poured out into their mothers' bosom.

13 What shall I ²testify unto thee? what shall I liken to thee,
O daughter of Jerusalem?

What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin
daughter of Zion?

For thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?

14 Thy prophets have seen visions for thee of vanity and foolishness;

¹ Or, *breach*

² Or, *take to witness for thee*

My liver is poured upon the earth] The liver seems to have been looked upon, as were the rest of the vitals, as the seat of the emotions, and hence the expression in the text merely denotes strong and painful excitement. Cp. pouring out the heart, v. 19, Ps. lxii. 8; cp. Job xvi. 13.

destruction] mg. *breach*. See on Jer. iv. 20, xvii. 18.

12. *corn and wine]* Omit "and wine," not only from the nature of the case, and for the sake of correct metre, but because the Heb. word is not that elsewhere used in combination with "corn."

their soul is poured out, etc.] They swoon as the unhappy mother clasps them in her arms.

13. *shall I testify unto thee]* or, as mg. *take to witness for thee*. If the MT. be right, we can only explain it as meaning, Of what shall I assure thee? But it is better, specially in view of the parallel clause, to read with an inconsiderable change in the original (*'e'ērōk* for *'ā'îdēk*), for "testify" *compare*.

great like the sea] without measure.

who can heal thee?] Cp. Jer. xxx. 12 f.

14. The thought that the false prophets are worthy of condemnation for buoying the people up with vain hopes is distinctly in Jeremiah's manner (cp. Ezek. xii. 24, xiii. 6 f., xxii. 28). It is true that we here wholly lack the vehement rebukes which he administered to the people and the priests for their disloyalty to Jehovah. But it is not necessarily fatal to the prophet's authorship that the writer bestows unqualified pity on his fellow-countrymen. We can hardly look for invective in a sorrowful lament.

foolishness] i.e. what is meaningless, worthless.

And they have not discovered thine iniquity, to bring again thy captivity :

But have seen for thee ¹burdens of vanity and ²causes of banishment.

All that pass by clap their hands at thee ; 15

They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying :

Is this the city that men called The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth?

All thine enemies have opened their mouth wide against 16
thee ;

They hiss and gnash the teeth ; they say, We have swallowed her up ;

Certainly this is the day that we looked for ; we have found,
we have seen it.

¹ Or, *oracles*

² Or, *things to draw thee aside*

discovered] uncovered, revealed (to thee), a sense now obsolete. Cp.

“Go, draw aside the curtains, and *discover*
The several caskets to this noble prince.”

Merch. of Ven. Act II. Sc. 7.

to bring again thy captivity] See on Jer. xxix. 14.

burdens (better as mg. *oracles*) *of vanity*] i.e. false oracles. See on Jer. xxiii. 33 ff.

causes of banishment] or (less well) mg. *things to draw thee aside*, i.e. from Jehovah to idols. The Heb. word for “banishment” is not elsewhere found. It here points to the consequences which followed the teaching of the false prophets. Cp. Jer. xxvii. 10, 15.

15. *They hiss and wag their head*] expressions denoting amazement mixed with contempt. Cp. Jer. xviii. 16; 2 Kgs xix. 21; Job xxvii. 23; Ps. xxii. 7; Zeph. ii. 15.

that men called] These words (as Löhr, following J. D. Michaelis, points out) should for metrical reasons be omitted.

The perfection of beauty, the joy etc.] Cp. for both phrases Ps. xlviii. 2, and for the former one Ps. l. 2 and (of Tyre) Ezek. xxvii. 3, xxviii. 13. They were possibly current phrases used by Psalmists and this writer independently.

16. For the inverted order of the initial letters in the Heb. of this and the next v., see Intr., p. 321.

All thine enemies...against thee] almost identical with iii. 46. Löhr refers for the expression to Ps. xxii. 13, xxxv. 21.

gnash the teeth] in fierce hatred. Cp. Ps. xxxv. 16, xxxvii. 12. For a parallel to the last words of this v., see Ps. xxxv. 21.

- 17 The LORD hath done that which he devised;
 He hath ¹fulfilled his word that he commanded in the days
 of old;
 He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied:
 And he hath caused the enemy to rejoice over thee,
 He hath exalted the horn of thine adversaries.
- 18 Their heart cried unto the Lord:
 O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river
 day and night;
 Give thyself no respite; let not the apple of thine eye
 cease.
- 19 Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the watches;
 Pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord:

¹ Or, *finished*

17. *fulfilled*] mg. *finished*. Cp. the same Heb. verb in Is. x. 12 "perform."

in the days of old] That which had happened was in fulfilment of the warnings of Lev. xxvi. 14 ff., Deut. xxviii. 15, as well as of the prophets.

He hath exalted the horn of thine adversaries] See on v. 3, and cp. I Sam. ii. 1, 10; also Ps. lxxxix. 42.

18. "Their" has no antecedent, and the beginning of the v. is evidently corrupt in its harsh combination of assertion and exhortation, although the corruption, supported as it is by LXX and Syr. (so Vulg.), must be of long standing. The best emendation seems to be that of Ewald, who has the imperative *Cry* (ḡa'ākī) for "cried" (ḡā'ak). We may continue *with thy heart*, or by a more drastic change, *with thy voice*. In any case "Zion" will end the first of the three lines. For the personification of "wall" see on v. 8. While this application of metaphor goes far beyond Western habits of thought, we must yet recognise the power of the memories clinging to old walls, e.g. in Chester, in Venice, etc. See Adeney, *op. cit.* p. 172.

apple] pupil. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 10; Ps. xvii. 8.

19. The v. consists of *four* lines. Ewald and Budde (followed by Löhr) conclude independently that the last is a gloss suggested by v. 12. *at the beginning of the watches*] i.e. of each watch. In New Testament times the Jews had adopted the Roman division of the night into four watches of three hours each (see Matt. xiv. 25; Mark xiii. 35). Up to that time the division was threefold, each consisting of four hours. Cp. Exod. xiv. 24; Ps. lxiii. 6, etc. The watchman's cry would rouse the sleeper to realise afresh the miseries of the situation.

Pour out thine heart like water] Cp. v. 11.

Lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children,

That faint for hunger at the top of every street.

See, O LORD, and behold, to whom thou hast done thus ! 20

Shall the women eat their fruit, the children that are dandled in the hands ?

Shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord ?

The youth and the old man lie on the ground in the 21 streets ;

My virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword :

Thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger ; thou hast slaughtered, *and* not pitied.

Thou hast called, as in the day of a solemn assembly, ¹my 22 terrors on every side,

And there was none that escaped or remained in the day of the LORD's anger :

Those that I have dandled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

¹ See Jer. vi. 25.

Lift up thy hands] in supplication.

20. Here begins the prayer made in response to the prophet's exhortation. The questions are rhetorical and mean (although the verbs are in the future), Wilt thou look with unconcern at the things which *have been* done? For the state of things (foretold Jer. xix. 9; Deut. xxviii. 53) cp. 2 Kgs vi. 25—30.

behold, to whom thou hast done thus] viz. Thy chosen ones of old. *that are dandled in the hands*] The thought of maternal tenderness in the forms in which it would ordinarily be displayed towards children of that age heightens the effect of the picture.

22. *Thou hast called, as in the day of a solemn assembly, my terrors on every side*] i.e. Jehovah has summoned for my destruction the sword, famine, and pestilence. For the comparison with a solemn assembly cp. v. 7, i. 15. The LXX (and similarly Targ.) render instead of "terrors" (from a similar Heb. root) *neighbouring villages* (so Löhr), which, if this be the sense, are spoken of as sharing in Jerusalem's calamities. The former view, however, is preferable, both as harmonizing better with the thought expressed in the last line, and as having probable reference to Jeremiah's favourite expression (see on Jer. vi. 25).

CH. III. 1—21. LAMENTS MINGLED WITH HOPE.

For remarks upon (a) the character of this ch., (b) its more elaborate acrostic structure, and (c) its probable date see Intr. chs. i. § 4, ii. § 4, iii. § 2.

The question which has most exercised commentators in connexion with the ch. is, whether we are to take the singular number, which prevails in it, as used (a) by an individual of himself, or (b) as representing the nation. Löhr, who (1893) followed Stade and Smend in adopting (b), "the community appearing under the figure of one who is visited severely by the LORD's wrath," has since (see *Zeitschrift d. A. T. Wiss.*, 1894, pp. 1—16 and his ed. of 1907) accepted (with Budde) the other view. He further holds that the poem has a threefold origin. (i) *Vv.* 1—24, before being brought to their acrostic shape, he considers to have formed a Psalm, not known otherwise, but quoted in its earlier stage by the author of Ps. cxliii., where *v.* 3 is identical with *v.* 6 here, only that there it is not yet acrosticized. (ii) *Vv.* 52—66 he thinks are the words of another Psalm, surviving thus in its adapted form. (iii) The intermediate *vv.* (25—51) according to him are the composition of one living at a post-exilic date who desired to speak in the name of Jeremiah, and with the help of references to the sufferings of the prophet's life to preach repentance. In support of this view he quotes many parallels, more or less convincing, with passages in Jeremiah. He supports his view as to the different origins of (i) and (ii) by pointing out that in (i) Jehovah is viewed as the enemy, in (ii) as the friend, in (i) as rejecting, in (ii) as hearkening to prayer. Moreover, in the former the poet is on the verge of despair, in the latter, he exhibits a consciousness of the hope inspired by Jehovah's inherent justice. He adds that, while it is true that two such fundamentally distinct attitudes of religious thought might be experienced by the same man at different times in his life, he would not be likely himself to combine them in the same poem. Thus his theory needs the intermediate *vv.* (25—51) as the poet's own. The above view, though not compelling acceptance as virtually certain (for the real change of tone from misery to hope comes in *v.* 22), is yet not without some probability. On the other hand in support of the view that the community are the subject may be pleaded the analogy of the other poems in the Book, as in them the nation is clearly the subject. Ball, who adopts (b), remarks that in this ch. "the poet deals less with incident and more with the moral significance of the nation's sufferings. If this be the application here, we may note a remarkable parallelism between the language descriptive of Zion in her misery and that used in the story of Job as the typical sufferer. Cp. *v.* 2 with Job xii. 25, *v.* 15 with ix. 18, *v.* 16 with ii. 8, *v.* 31 with v. 18, and see further in *vv.* 7, 12, 30 below. It is the religious culmination of the book." With regard to the theological tone of the ch. Löhr points out characteristic features in the middle portion of the three components, viz. (a) the universal sway of Jehovah, indicated in the title "the most High" (*vv.* 35, 38), in

I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his ³ wrath.

He hath led me and caused me to walk in darkness ¹and ² not in light.

Surely against me he turneth his hand again and again all ³ the day.

My flesh and my skin hath he ²made old ; he hath broken ⁴ my bones.

He hath builded against me, and compassed me with ³gall ⁵ and travail.

¹ Or, *without light*

² Or, *worn out*

³ See Deut. xxix. 18.

accordance with which the evil and injustice that a man suffers from others cannot be wrought without His leave, and (*b*) the individuality of religion, as stamped upon each soul that seeketh the LORD (*v.* 25) and has silently to bear His yoke (*vv.* 27 ff.). When these two features are combined, as here, then the conflict between personal consciousness and Jehovah's omnipotence leads at once to the perplexing problem relating to the sufferings of the righteous. The narrator here does not pass beyond the general O.T. standpoint in explaining all suffering as punishment for sin and he has no counsel to offer but that of calm resignation and hope. Cp. Ps. xxxvii. 7. If the LORD sends calamity, yet He will have compassion later.

1. *by the rod of his wrath*] For the figure cp. Job ix. 34, xxi. 9 ; Ps. lxxxix. 32 ; Is. x. 5. We should notice the absence of God's name *vv.* 1—21, except in *v.* 18, in contrast with its frequency afterwards, when a ground of hope is found in the Divine pity and purpose (*vv.* 22—40), and in the prayer of *vv.* 55—66.

4. Here commences a series of figures illustrating the miseries endured. They find many parallels in the Psalms and Job. For instances of the latter see *v.* 7.

he hath broken my bones] For this phrase cp. Is. xxxviii. 13 ; Jer. l. 17.

5. *He hath builded against me, and compassed*] Here as in *v.* 3 we have to deal with the idiom by which two verbs are used where we should in English have a verb and adverb. Translate therefore **He hath builded against me round about.**

gall] See on Jer. viii. 14. The combination with "travail" suggests some corruption in the text. Löhr adopts for his translation (though with some hesitation) *bitterness and wormwood.*

travail] weariness, hardship. From 1611 to the American edition of 1867 all editions of the Authorized Version had *travel* both here

- 6 ¹He hath made me to dwell in dark places, as those that have been long dead.
- 7 He hath fenced me about, that I cannot go forth; he hath made my chain heavy.
- 8 Yea, when I cry and call for help, he shutteth out my prayer.
- 9 He hath fenced up my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.
- 10 He is unto me as a bear lying in wait, as a lion in secret places.
- 11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces; he hath made me desolate.
- 12 He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.
- 13 He hath caused the ²shafts of his quiver to enter into my reins.

¹ See Ps. cxliii. 3.

² Heb. *sons*.

and in the case of Numb. xx. 14. It was probably in comparatively recent times that the two modes of spelling came to be definitely appropriated to distinct meanings of the word.

6. Identical with the last part of Ps. cxliii. 3. See intr. note.

dark places] in the gloom of Sheol.

long dead] or, *for ever dead*, permanently forgotten, never able to return into the light of God's favour.

7. Cp. Job xix. 8; so with *v.* 8, Job xix. 7, xxx. 20, and we may perhaps add with *v.* 5, Job xix. 12.

9. *hath made my paths crooked*] The writer, seeing that the direct way was as it were blocked, tried side paths, but found that they also failed to lead him in the desired direction. The figure expresses perplexity and dismay.

10. Not only misery, but active forms of danger present themselves. We find the bear and lion in conjunction also in Hos. xiii. 8.

11. He hath driven me from the path, and then sprung upon me and devoured me.

desolate] **appalled**, stupified. Cp. iv. 5; akin to the word rendered "astonishment" in Jer. v. 30 (mg.), xviii. 16.

12, 13. Jehovah is now likened not to the beast of prey, but to the hunter. Cp. Job xvi. 12 f.

13. *shafts*] lit. as mg. the more poetical *sons*.

reins] See on Jer. xii. 2.

I am become a derision to all my people; and their song 14
all the day.

He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath sated me with 15
wormwood.

He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath 16
covered me with ashes.

And thou hast ¹removed my soul far off from peace; I forgot 17
prosperity.

And I said, My strength is perished, and mine expectation 18
from the LORD.

Remember mine affliction and my ²misery, the wormwood 19
and the gall.

My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is bowed down 20
within me.

This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

21

¹ Or, *cast off* ² Or, *wandering* Or, *outcast state*

14. *a derision*] See on Jer. xx. 7 f., and cp. Job xii. 4, xxx. 1—9; Ps. lxix. 12.

15. *wormwood*] See on Jer. ix. 15, xxiii. 15.

16. *broken my teeth with gravel stones*] The metaphor from food is continued. The prophet is like one whose teeth are worn away by the continued action of grit mixed with his bread. Cp. Prov. xx. 17.

17. *thou hast removed (mg. cast off) my soul*] The change to the second person is abrupt. LXX have "he has thrust away," the Syr. (and so Targ.) "my soul is thrust away," but, as Pe. remarks, this is improbable in view of v. 31. The writer there, however, need not be the same as here; see intr. note. By adopting the 3rd person we should avoid the introduction of a direct address to God, which seems not to come earlier than v. 19.

19. God is now directly invoked.

misery] mg. *wandering*, or, *outcast state*.

21. This and the previous v. are akin in thought to Ps. xlii. 4, 5 (Heb. 5, 6), and, inasmuch as the words there corresponding to *This I recall* of the present passage have reference to that which follows, these words also are made (so Löhr and Pe.) to relate to the more hopeful thoughts that come in v. 22 and onwards. But the structure of the poem, v. 21 being the third (and last) of its group, and the previous context form an argument that the last words of v. 20 are

- 22 *It is of* the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.
- 23 They are new every morning ; great is thy faithfulness.
- 24 The LORD is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I hope in him.
- 25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
- 26 It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.
- 27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

what the prophet recalls for his comfort. The humility arising from sin dwelt upon and acknowledged produces in due course a sense that contrition will be accepted and deliverance granted. Hence arises the change of tone in the section which follows.

22, 23. There are metrical irregularities in these *vv.* as they stand. We should probably (with Löhr) read the first, "The Lord's compassion ceaseth not"; "His love is not spent," and the second, which is now too short in its first part, we may safely extend by supplying from the former clause "New is thy compassion every morning."

24. *The LORD is my portion*] a frequent expression in the Psalms (xvi. 5, lxxiii. 26, cxix. 57, cxlii. 5).

25—51. See intr. note.

25—27. *Good* is the leading word of this group. The knowledge of the Lord's goodness (25) is that which (26) makes it good that man should be hopeful and submissive and (27) makes him also to recognise the moral good that comes of suffering. Löhr and Pe. cp. Rom. v. 3—5. "These *vv.* have the ring of autobiography" (Dummelow). Cp.

"Nor less I deem...

That we can feed this mind of ours

In a wise passiveness."

Wordsworth, *Expostulation and Reply (Poems of Sentiment and Reflection)*.

27. *in his youth*] in the time when his passions are strongest and therefore most need the discipline, which, if established in its seat then, will hold sway throughout his life. The words by no means imply that the writer was young at the time he used them. Rather he is looking back through a long life of trouble and the experience which he has gained in the course of it. Cp. Heb. xii. 7—11.

28. The hortative form is better than *mg.* *He sitteth alone, etc.* For sitting alone in grief, cp. Jer. xv. 17. The connexion is, inasmuch as suffering is really attended with benefit to the sufferer, let him submit readily to it.

¹Let him sit alone and keep silence, because he hath laid it 28
upon him.

Let him put his mouth in the dust ; if so be there may be 29
hope.

Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him ; let him be 30
filled full with reproach.

For the Lord will not cast off for ever. 31

For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion 32
according to the multitude of his mercies.

For he doth not afflict ²willingly, nor grieve the children of 33
men.

To crush under foot all the prisoners of the earth, 34

To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most 35
High,

To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord ³approveth not. 36

¹ Or, *He sitteth alone &c.* (vv. 28—30)

² Heb. *from his heart.*

³ Heb. *seeth not.*

hath laid] The subject is God.

29. *Let him put his mouth in the dust*] the Eastern way of expressing absolute submission by prostrating oneself.

30. *Let him give his cheek*] Cp. Job xvi. 10; Is. l. 6; Matt. v. 39.

31—33. This group contains the three thoughts which produce the resignation, (a) because punishment will be only for a time (cp. Is. liv. 8), (b) because God is by nature merciful, (c) because even in punishment it is in no angry or vindictive spirit that God acts.

31. Cp. Ps. xxx. 5 (with mg.), lxxvii. 7 ff., ciii. 9; Is. lvii. 16; Mic. vii. 18.

33. *willingly*] lit. as mg. *from his heart.*

34—36. Three species of wrong-doing on the part of the victorious oppressor are here enumerated; (a) To treat prisoners with cruelty, (b) To give an unrighteous decision at law: for the judges as representing God were called by His name (e.g. Ex. xxi. 6 with mg.; see Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6), and hence the expression "before the face of the Most High," (c) To defraud a man of his legal rights (which might be done without an actual trial). The sense of the whole will depend upon the view we take of the last words. They may be rendered either, (i) as a question, *Doth not the Lord regard* (such acts)? so Löhr, following Böttcher and Nöldeke, or (ii) as R.V. mg. *seeth not*. Hesitation as to rendering the Heb. verb thus might be met by the change of one consonant (*raʿah* = *approve* for *ra'ah*, *see*).

- 37 Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?
- 38 Out of the mouth of the Most High cometh there not evil and good?
- 39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, ¹a man for the punishment of his sins?
- 40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.
- 41 Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.
- 42 We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast not pardoned.
- 43 Thou hast ²covered with anger and pursued us; thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied.

¹ Or, *a man that is in his sins*

² Or, *covered thyself*

37—39. The order of thought in this group is, All events are absolutely in the hands of God. Thus calamity and prosperity come in response to His command. But it is man's sin that procures for him the former; he therefore may not complain.

37. Cp. Ps. xxxiii. 9.

38. Cp. Is. xlv. 7; Am. iii. 6.

39. The E.VV., making the whole line to be a question, are more in consonance with the construction of the two earlier members of the group, than is the other proposed rendering, viz. *Of what should a living man complain? Each (should complain) of his sins.* In that case we should require *mourn* rather than "complain."

living] i.e. why should a man murmur at misfortunes, when they are due to him for his sin?

a man...his sins] mg. (less well) *a man that is in his sins.*

40—42. *Let us search*] As it is through our sins that this evil is come upon us, let us (40) seek out what has been amiss in us and repent, (41) place ourselves before God in prayer, (42) confess our sin.

41. *with our hands*] Cp. Ex. ix. 33; 1 Kgs viii. 22.

42. *We...thou*] The pronouns are emphatic in the original. *Thou* and *we* have been at variance.

thou...pardoned] Observe how this clause forms a connecting link with the next group; similarly "mine eye" in v. 48.

43. *covered*] mg., better, *covered thyself.* Thou hast clothed thyself in wrath. This accords with the next line.

Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that *our* prayer 44
should not pass through.

Thou hast made us *as* the offscouring and refuse in the midst 45
of the peoples.

All our enemies have opened their mouth wide against us. 46
Fear and the pit are come upon us, ¹devastation and de- 47
struction.

Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water, for the de- 48
struction of the daughter of my people.

Mine eye poureth down, and ceaseth not, without any inter- 49
mission,

Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven. 50

Mine eye affecteth my soul, because of all the daughters of 51
my city.

They have chased me sore like a bird, that are mine enemies 52
without cause.

¹ Or, *tumult*

44. That Jehovah is veiled by darkness from human eyes is a thought which frequently meets us. See 1 Kgs viii. 12; Ps. xcvi. 2; Is. xlv. 15.

45. For the thought cp. Nah. iii. 6; 1 Cor. iv. 13. It was exemplified in the Middle Ages in England and elsewhere (see *Ivanhoe*) and is still to be seen in Eastern Europe in the *Judenhetze*.

46. On the peculiarity of the alphabetic arrangement here see Intr., p. 321, and for this v. cp. ch. ii. 16.

47. *Fear and the pit*] See on Jer. xlviii. 43, of which this reminds us, and cp. Is. xxiv. 17 f.

devastation] mg. *tumult*. The original word occurs here only.

48. *runneth down with rivers of water*] a still stronger expression than that of i. 16, where see note. Cp. Jer. xiii. 17; Ps. cxix. 136.

49. *ceaseth not*] Cp. Jer. ix. 1, xiv. 17.

50. *Till the LORD look down etc.*] Cp. Is. lxiii. 15.

51. *affecteth my soul*] The inflammation of eyes caused by continual weeping, or, better, the sights of misery on which he looks, add to his mental suffering.

the daughters of my city] either those whose untoward fate has been already lamented (i. 4, 18, ii. 10, 21), or the villages, daughter towns of Jerusalem. For this sense cp. (with mg.) Numb. xxi. 25; Josh. xvii. 11. In Ps. xlviii. 11 "daughters" has the same sense.

52—66. See intr. note.

- 53 They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and have cast a stone upon me.
 54 Waters flowed over mine head; I said, I am cut off.
 55 I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the lowest dungeon.
 56 Thou heardest my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.
 57 Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.
 58 O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.
 59 O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong; judge thou my cause.
 60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their devices against me.
 61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, and all their devices against me;
 62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their imagination against me all the day.

52—54. There is a possible reference on the part of the writer to Jer. xxxviii. 6, but this is rendered unlikely by the fact that the "dungeon" had no water in it, and thus *v.* 54 is inapplicable. The use of the singular "stone" in *v.* 53 is difficult to understand, unless it refers to covering thus the mouth of a pit.

54. *Waters flowed over mine head*] figuratively. So in Ps. xlii. 7, lxix. 2, which latter Ps. was traditionally ascribed to Jeremiah.

I am cut off] Cp. Ps. xxxi. 22, lxxxviii. 5; 2 Chr. xxvi. 21; Is. liii. 8.

56. The word rendered "breathing" occurs but once elsewhere (Ex. viii. 15 [Heb. *v.* 11]), and has there the sense of *respite, relief*. Accordingly Ewald proposes (by a change of one consonant) to render *my cry*, and consider "at my cry" to be a gloss.

57. *Thou drewest near*] Cp. Ps. cxlv. 18.

58. *thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul*] The enemy are likened to opponents in a suit at law. The Lord has been the writer's successful advocate against them. He is therefore invoked once again to defeat them.

60, 61. Cp. Jer. xi. 19.

62. *The lips*] i.e. the utterances, governed by *Thou heardest* of *v.* 61.

Behold thou their sitting down, and their rising up; I am 63
their song.

Thou wilt render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according 64
to the work of their hands.

Thou wilt give them ¹hardness of heart, thy curse unto 65
them.

Thou wilt pursue them in anger, and destroy them from 66
under the heavens of the LORD.

How is the gold become dim! *how* is the most pure gold 4
changed!

¹ Or, *blindness* Heb. *covering*.

63. *song*] Cp. Job xxx. 9.

their sitting down, and their rising up] their whole course of life.
Cp. Ps. cxxxix. 2.

64—66. For the anticipation of punishment here expressed see on
Jer. xviii. 23; C.B. (Kirkpatrick) on Ps. xxviii. 4.

65. *hardness*] or, as mg. *blindness*, Heb. *covering*. Cp. 2 Cor.
iii. 15.

thy curse unto them] dependent on "wilt give," or meaning, *thy
curse shall be* unto them. Either of these explanations is more in
accordance with the context than to make the clause an imprecation,
May thy curse be upon them!

CH. IV. 1—22. THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE ARE CONSE- QUENT ON SIN.

This ch. differs from the earlier ones, (*a*) in dwelling more on the
sufferings of *various classes* of people, (*b*) in bringing out more clearly
that these sufferings were the consequences of the national sin. *Vv.*
1—10 set forth the miseries attendant on the siege, 11, 12 seem to
indicate those of the capture, 13—16 point out that the prophets and
priests are guilty and unclean, as though lepers, polluted as they are
with innocent blood, 17—20 describe vividly the anxiety and miseries
of the siege, 21, 22 declare that Edom's triumph will be but short-lived.

The *vv.*, acrostic as in earlier poems, consist each of two instead of
three members. For the date see intr. note to ch. ii. Both chs. are
thought to be by the same author, two points being brought out forcibly
in each, viz. the responsibility of the leaders for the national disaster,
and the sufferings of the children.

1, 2. *gold—most pure gold—fine gold*] used metaphorically for the
citizens, the choicest of whom are also called *the stones of the sanctuary*.
Cp. Zech. ix. 16 ("stones of a crown").

1. *changed*] The verb in the MT. has not a pure Heb. form. By

- The stones of the sanctuary are poured out at the top of every street.
- 2 The precious sons of Zion, ¹comparable to fine gold,
How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!
- 3 Even the jackals draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones:
The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.
- 4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst:
The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.
- 5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets:
They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

¹ Heb. *that may be weighed against*.

the change of a diacritic mark Löhr, following Nöldeke, gets the sense *are become hateful*. A somewhat greater change (the omission of a consonant) would produce the adjective *old* (*yāshān* for *yishne*). In that case we should render, *How is the ancient gold become dim, the most pure gold!*

are poured out at the top of every street] are treated as worthless.

2. *work of the hands of the potter*] as helpless as the earth which is moulded by him.

3. *the jackals*] See on Jer. ix. 11, li. 34.

like the ostriches in the wilderness] Cp. C.B. (Davidson) on Job xxxix. 15 f. for "the popular belief that the ostrich did not brood but left her eggs to be hatched in the sun.... The belief is not sustained by observation, except to this extent, that the bird does not brood till her complement of eggs (thirty in number) be laid, and that during the earlier part of incubation she often leaves the nest by day to go in search of food. It is also said that she lays a number of eggs outside the nest, which are not incubated but serve as food for the poults when they are hatched."

5. *delicately*] luxuriously. Children are still the subject, and not, as has been suggested, rich persons. In the latter case we should have to render *carried on scarlet* (i.e. litters or couches furnished with costly stuffs of that colour), unduly forcing the sense of the Heb. verb.

desolate] See on ch. iii. 11.

embrace dunghills] for want of a better couch.

For ¹the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater 6
 than ²the sin of Sodom,
 That was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands ³were
 laid upon her.
 Her ⁴nobles were purer than snow, they were whiter than 7
 milk,
 They were more ruddy in body than ⁵rubies, their polishing
 was as of sapphire :
 Their visage is ⁶blacker than a coal ; they are not known in 8
 the streets :
 Their skin cleaveth to their bones ; it is withered, it is be-
 come like a stick.
 They that be slain with the sword are better than they that 9
 be slain with hunger ;

¹ Or, *the punishment of the iniquity* ² Or, *the punishment of*
the sin ³ Or, *fell* See 2 Sam. iii. 29. ⁴ Or, *Nazirites*
⁵ Or, *corals* ⁶ Heb. *darker than blackness*.

6. *the iniquity—the sin*] rather than as mg. and A.V. *the punish-
 ment of the iniquity—the punishment of the sin*. There is no assertion
 in this part of the v. as to the comparative amount of punishment, but
 from the admitted fact that the sufferings of Jerusalem exceeded those
 of Sodom, it is inferred that the sin must have been in like proportion.
 Sodom perished in a moment, there were no prolonged sufferings, such
 as are brought about or directly administered by the hand of man.

were laid upon her] The words are susceptible of various interpreta-
 tions: no hands raged (whirled) about her (Ewald), too swiftly, even
 for men to wring their hands (Löhr). The verb is used of a tempest in
 Jer. xxiii. 19, xxx. 23. The mg. here suggests *fell*, comparing 2 Sam.
 iii. 29.

7, 8. Cp. vv. 1, 2. The emaciation produced by famine and hard-
 ship is vividly portrayed. Cp. Job xix. 20, xxx. 30.

7. *nobles*] probably right, as in Gen. xlix. 26; Deut. xxxiii. 16 (in
 which places mg. renders “princes”) as against the more frequent
 sense *Nazirites* (as mg. here).

rubies] mg. *corals*.

their polishing (lit. *casting*) *was as of sapphire*] Not only their
 bright, glowing appearance, but also their well-shaped figures sug-
 gested a carefully cut precious stone. Löhr, relying on the similarity
 of two Heb. consonants (*g* and *n*), by a slight change takes the word
 to be from the root which appears in Jer. vii. 29 (“cut off thine hair”)
 and renders *The locks of their hair glittered as a sapphire*.

8. *blacker than a coal*] lit. as mg. *darker than blackness*.

Their skin cleaveth to their bones] Cp. Job xix. 20.

9. The two modes of death experienced in the siege are contrasted.

- For these¹ pine away, stricken through, for want of the fruits of the field.
- 10 The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children ;
They were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.
- 11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury, he hath poured out his fierce anger ;
And he hath kindled a fire in Zion, which hath devoured the foundations thereof.
- 12 The kings of the earth believed not, neither all the inhabitants of the world,
That the adversary and the enemy should enter into the gates of Jerusalem.
- 13 *It is* because of the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests,

¹ Heb. *flow away*.

pine away] lit. as mg. *flow away*.
stricken through] See on Jer. xxxvii. 10, where (mg.) “thrust through” is the same word in the Heb. As the expression seems scarcely applicable to those dying of hunger, the Heb. text is somewhat suspicious, but no obviously satisfactory emendation has been suggested.

10. Cp. ch. ii. 20, and Jer. xix. 9.
pitiful] (hitherto) compassionate. For this meaning, as opposed to its modern sense, pitiable, cp. Latimer, *Sermons*, p. 391. “Because I speak here of orphans, I shall exhort you to be *pitiful* unto them.”—*Bible Word Book*.

sodden] *boiled* (cp. Ex. xii. 9); the participle of *to seethe*, for which see 2 Kgs iv. 38.

11. *hath kindled a fire*] metaphorical, as in i. 13, ii. 3.

12. *all the inhabitants of the world*] an ordinary form of Eastern hyperbole, suggesting to their minds only the same notion as our *every body*, the obvious limitations being given by the sense in each case. The preaching of Isaiah, supported as it was by the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 Kgs xix. 34 f.), led to the belief, in spite of Jeremiah’s warnings, that Jerusalem could not be absolutely overthrown, a belief which the writer here evidently had shared. This circumstance of itself throws doubt upon Jeremiah’s authorship of this book. Jerusalem’s fortifications, in fact, had been much strengthened by Uzziah (2 Chr. xxvi. 9), Jotham (*ib.* xxvii. 3), and Manasseh (*ib.* xxxiii. 14).

13. *the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests*] Cp. Jer. v. 31, vi. 13, viii. 10, xxiii. 11 f.

That have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her.
They wander as blind men in the streets, they are polluted 14
with blood,

So that men cannot touch their garments.

Depart ye, they cried unto them, Unclean ! depart, depart, 15
touch not :

¹When they fled away and wandered, men said among the
nations, They shall no more sojourn *here*.

The ²anger of the LORD hath divided them ; he will no more 16
regard them :

They respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured
not the elders.

Our eyes do yet fail *in looking* for our vain help : 17

¹ Or, *Yea*

² Heb. *face*.

14. *They*] these prophets and priests.

wander, etc.] in perplexity and helplessness, stamped with the mark
of Cain.

15. Those who met these blood-stained priests and prophets in the
street abhorred them, and warned them off with the cry which the
leper was himself to raise, *Unclean, unclean !* (Lev. xiii. 45). Theirs
was a moral leprosy. The *v.*, as it stands, is too long from the metrical
point of view and so probably includes one or more glosses. Moreover
the Heb. for “fled away” occurs here only. By the change of a con-
sonant we get the root rendered (R.V.) “wanderer” in Gen. iv. 12.
“The fate of Cain falls upon those who were guilty of his sin.” Pe.

When] perhaps as mg. *Yea*.

they fled away and wandered, etc.] *when they fled away, then they
wandered.* Abroad also men would have none of them.

16. *hath divided them*] *hath scattered them* (among the nations).

they] *men*, as in the previous *v.*

elders] with LXX read *prophets*, which is more in harmony with
the preceding context. Pe. suggests that “elders” may have been
substituted through the influence of *v.* 12.

17. The expectation that Egypt or some other nation might come to
the rescue, was cherished throughout the year and a half of the siege,
and here is set forth the heart-sickness caused by this hope deferred,
together with a vivid description of the last thrilling scenes before the
capture of the city. That this hope was not shared by Jeremiah is
shewn by Jer. xxxvii. 5—10. See Intr. p. 324.

do yet fail] perhaps we should translate (see last note) *did fail*
(Heb. imperfect of graphic description) and so render the verbs that
follow, *we watched...they hunted...that we could not go...our end drew
near...were fulfilled...was come.* But the tenses in R.V. may be justi-
fiable, as historic presents, vividly descriptive of the past.

In our watching we have watched for a nation that could not save.

- 18 They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets :
Our end is near, our days are fulfilled ; for our end is come.
- 19 Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heaven :
They chased us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.
- 20 The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits ;
Of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the nations.

In our watching] or, on our watch-tower.

18. *They hunt our steps]* This expresses the danger which existed in the "streets" (lit. broad places, and therefore exposed) from the towers which were gradually advanced nearer to the walls by the besiegers. Eastern *streets* are too narrow to expose their occupants to the weapons of a besieging force.

19. *swifter than the eagles]* Cp. Deut. xxviii. 49, and see on Jer. iv. 13.

They chased us upon the mountains] The metaphor in this and the following *v.* is taken from hunting. The reference is either to the circumstances attendant on the capture of Zedekiah (Jer. xxxix. 5 f., lii. 8) who is referred to more distinctly in the following *v.*, or in general to the condition of the fugitives at the taking of the city.

20. *The breath of our nostrils]* Pe. remarks that the phrase is an ancient one, being found in the Tell el Amarna letters (fifteenth century B.C.). Cp. Seneca (*ad Neronem de Clementia*, i. 4) "He (the Emperor) is the breath of life, which these many thousand (subjects) draw." As regards its application to Zedekiah individually we are to remember that whatever may have been his personal weaknesses (and he was weak rather than vicious), he was the one on whom the whole of the people's hopes depended for the continuance of their national life. So "the romantic enthusiasm of Cavaliers and Non-jurors for the Stuarts was not to be accounted for by the merits and attractions of the various successive sovereigns and pretenders towards whom it was directed," Adeney, *op. cit.* p. 298.

Of whom we said...] The reference may very possibly be to a hope entertained by the fugitives that by escaping to the mountainous region of Moab or Ammon they might maintain in some sort their national existence under Zedekiah.

21, 22. For the fierce vengeance which is to come on Edom cp. Jer. xlix. 7—22; Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Is. xxxiv. specially *vv.* 5—17; Ezek. xxv. 12 f., xxxv. ; Obad. 10—15.

Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in 21
the land of Uz:

The cup shall pass through unto thee also; thou shalt be
drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

¹The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter 22
of Zion;

He will no more carry thee away into captivity:

He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom;

He will discover thy sins.

Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us:

5

Behold, and see our reproach.

¹ Or, *Thine iniquity hath an end*

21. *Rejoice and be glad*] Enjoy thy shortlived triumph, while thou
mayest.

that dwellest in the land of Uz] See on Jer. xxv. 20.

The cup] For this, as a figure for Jehovah's wrath, cp. Jer. xxv. 15 ff.
thou shalt be drunken, etc.] a figurative way of saying, thou shalt be ex-
posed in the eyes of the world to the contempt which attends upon
disaster (cp. i. 8 and Hab. ii. 15 f.).

22. *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished*] (better than
mg. *Thine iniquity hath an end*) the prophetic perfect. Cp. Is. xl. 1 f.
discover] uncover, lay bare. Cp. (in A.V.) Ps. xxix. 9; Is. xxii. 8,
and (in A.V. and R.V.) Mic. i. 6.

CH. V. 1—18. A PATHETIC ENUMERATION OF THE INSULTS HEAPED ON ZION BECAUSE OF HER SINS.

1. This final poem, although its *vv.* are equal in number with the
letters of the Heb. alphabet, yet does not, like its predecessors, ad-
here to any rule as to the initial letters. "Rhyme takes the place
of the alphabetical structure, the poem having not less than 45 words
ending in the sound *u*. Cp. Ps. cxxiv." (Dummelow). Like ch. iv.,
as against ch. iii., each *v.* is made up of two, not three, members.
Neither is it written in the *Kinah* rhythm. For the question of its
date see *Intr.*, p. 326. The poet (*v.* 1) calls upon Jehovah to re-
gard the ignominy which has befallen His people, describes (*vv.* 2—4)
the misery which exists in the land, and (*vv.* 5, 6) the persecutions
inflicted on them from without. He tells (*vv.* 7—10) of the privations
endured by his people, and (*vv.* 11—14) of the indignities perpetrated
at and after the capture of the city, and, as the last element in the
picture (*vv.* 15—18), the universal and hopeless depression. The
description terminates (*vv.* 19—22) in an appeal for Jehovah's help,
grounded upon the thought of His abiding omnipotence.

- 2 Our inheritance is turned unto strangers,
Our houses unto aliens.
3 We are orphans and fatherless,
Our mothers are as widows.
4 We have drunken our water for money ;
Our wood ¹is sold unto us.
5 Our pursuers are upon our necks :
We are weary, and have no rest.
6 We have given the hand to the Egyptians,
And to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.
7 Our fathers have sinned, and are not ;
And we have borne their iniquities.
8 Servants rule over us :

¹ Heb. *cometh for price*.

2. *Our inheritance*] our land, forfeited to the conquerors.

3. *orphans and fatherless*] the fathers being in exile and the mothers thus "as widows," without protection.

4. The bitterness of their captive state is shewn by the fact that they, the rightful owners, were compelled to buy from the enemy who had come into possession the commonest necessities of life.
is sold] lit. as mg. *cometh for price*.

5. *Our pursuers are upon our necks*] The expression is a strange one, as applied to those remaining in the land. Since in the original the consonants of "upon" are identical with those for "yoke," we may either substitute the latter for the former (so Ball), rendering *the yoke of our neck*, and altering "our pursuers" to *they made heavy*, or, with this latter change consider that both words ("yoke" and "upon") were originally in the Heb. text, *The yoke on our neck they have made heavy*. This latter rendering is mentioned by Löhr, and favoured by Pe.

6. Not only are they subject to privations at home, but they have been driven by them into servitude abroad. Hos. vii. 11 also combines Egypt and Assyria. The distance of the latter has caused it to be suspected here. Ball, with some slight changes in MT., eliminates both the proper names, and renders, *To adversaries we submitted, Saying we shall be satisfied with bread*. He also transposes this with v. 5.

the Assyrians] As the traditional foes of Israel, their name survives in this passage, although their Empire had been succeeded by that of Babylon. Cp. Ezra vi. 22 for this use of the word Assyria even in Persian times. For "we have given the hand" see mg. of Jer. i. 15.

7. *we have borne their iniquities*] See on Jer. xxxi. 29. The children, who, however, it must be acknowledged (see v. 16) shared the guilt of preceding generations, have to bear the penalty escaped by their forbears.

8. *Servants rule*] The reference may be to cases where slaves

There is none to deliver us out of their hand.	
We get our bread with the peril of our lives	9
Because of the sword of the wilderness.	
Our skin is ¹ black like an oven	10
Because of the burning heat of famine.	
They ravished the women in Zion,	11
The maidens in the cities of Judah.	
Princes were hanged up by their hand :	12
The faces of elders were not honoured.	
The young men bare the mill,	13
And the children stumbled under the wood.	
The elders have ceased from the gate,	14
The young men from their music.	

¹ Or, *hot*

actually rose to positions of authority. Cp. Tobiah in Neh. ii. 10, 19. Budde suggests that such persons may have seized upon property (cp. Hab. i. 6) and forced the Jews to earn their bread under them as day-labourers.

9. *We get our bread*] The reference is to the bands of wild Arabs (Bedaween), who plundered them as they ventured from the shelter of the city to reap the harvest or to tend the cattle or sheep of their masters.

the sword of the wilderness] a unique expression in O.T. For the sense see last note. A suggestion, involving only changes of vocalisation and of one consonant (*ʾamiddeber* instead of *hammidbar*), is to read for "of the wilderness" and *because of pestilence*. Cp. Jer. xiv. 12, xxi. 7, xxvii. 13, xxxiv. 17 (Stade, ZATW, xv. p. 285). But *pestilence* has no proper place in this context. *Enc. Bibl.* (2700) suggests *Arabian* for "sword" (*ʾarāb* for *hereb*).

10. The feverishness and wasting brought on by hunger is meant. *black*] or as mg. *hot*.

11, 12. We notice the sudden harking back to incidents connected immediately with the capture of the city.

12. The reference may either be to impalement after death, or to torture in order, as Pe. suggests, to obtain information as to hidden treasure. Both death by crucifixion and subsequent impalement were regarded with the utmost abhorrence by the Jews. For the former see Deut. xxi. 23.

13. Tenderness of age did not secure against the most oppressive and menial of labours.

14. *from the gate*] the place of social enjoyment and conversation, answering to our clubs and other places of entertainment. See on Jer. xiv. 2.

- 15 The joy of our heart is ceased ;
 Our dance is turned into mourning.
 16 The crown is fallen from our head :
 Woe unto us ! for we have sinned.
 17 For this our heart is faint ;
 For these things our eyes are dim ;
 18 For the mountain of Zion, which is desolate ;
 The ¹foxes walk upon it.
 19 Thou, O LORD, ²abidest for ever ;
 Thy throne is from generation to generation.
 20 Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time ?
 21 Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned ;
 Renew our days as of old.
 22 ³But thou hast utterly rejected us,
 Thou art very wroth against us.

¹ Or, *jackals* ² Or, *sittest* as king ³ Or, *Unless thou...and art &c.*

16. *The crown is fallen from our head*] Our honour is brought to the dust.

18. *foxes*] mg. *jackals*. The words imply that a considerable time has passed since the overthrow of the Temple.

19—22. See intr. note to ch.

19. *abidest*] mg. *sittest* as king. Cp. Ps. cii. 12.

20. Since this is so, why is Israel left desolate?

21. *Turn thou us...*] suggestive of Jer. xxxi. 18, but see note there. Here the sense is not, bring back the exiles, but give us a repentant heart. Cp. Ps. lxxx. 3 ff.

22. *But, etc.*] better as mg., *Unless thou...and art, etc.* The whole sentence is an hypothesis not to be accepted as fact. God's anger cannot last for ever, and thus there is yet hope.

Although the Book does in fact close with the language of hope, that is so little apparent on the first reading that in the synagogues *v.* 21 was repeated at the end, that its words might thus be the last to fall upon the ear. A similar expedient is used in the case of Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Malachi. See note on Jer. lii. 34.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I.

TRADITIONS RELATING TO JEREMIAH.

1. That Jeremiah addressed a severe rebuke to the Jews in Egypt is the last undoubted fact which we possess in connexion with him (ch. xlv. ; see on v. 1), and it has been conjectured that it was in accordance with his own desire that his faithful minister Baruch refrained from inserting in the Book of his prophecies any further particulars of his life or record of his end—so slender at the outset and even inconsistent are the traditional notices.

2. The Christian tradition was that the Jews in Egypt, provoked by his rebukes, stoned him to death "*Jeremias lapidatur*" Tert. *adv. Gnost.* c. 8 ; "*Jeremias lapidatus...a populo*," Hieron. *adv. Jov.* II. 37. See also beginning of § 8 below.

3. The Jewish tradition, perhaps, however, invented by way of hiding the truth of the charge brought against them by the Christians, was that the prophet had escaped from Egypt to Babylon, and there died.

4. In the Book of Ecclesiasticus (ch. xlix. 7) (generally dated between B.C. 190 and 170), Jeremiah is referred to thus:—"They entreated him evil; and yet he was sanctified in the womb to be a prophet, to root out, and to afflict, and to destroy; and in like manner to build, and to plant." See Jer. i. 10.

5. In 2 Macc. ii. 1-7 we are told that Jeremiah at the exile "commanded them that were carried away to take of the fire," and that "the prophet, being warned of God, commanded that the tabernacle and the ark should follow with him, when he went forth into the mountain where Moses went up and beheld the heritage of God. And Jeremiah came and found a chamber in the rock, and there he brought in the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense; and he made fast the door. And some of those that followed with him came there that they might mark the way, and could not find it. But when Jeremiah perceived it, he blamed them, saying, Yea, and the place shall be unknown until God gather the people again together, and mercy come."

6. Judas Maccabaeus before his conflict with Nicanor sees in a vision (2 Macc. xv. 12—16) “a man of venerable age and exceeding glory, and wonderful and most majestic was the dignity around him...the lover of the brethren,...Jeremiah the prophet of God,” who presents him with a sword of gold, by which to prevail.

7. The following is the form which the tradition had assumed in the time of Polyhistor (a Greek historian who was brought to Rome by Sylla the Dictator). He is quoted by Eusebius (*Praepar. Evang.* ix. 39) as stating that in the time of Jehoiakim Jeremiah prophesied. He found the Jews sacrificing to a golden idol, named Baal, and announced the impending disaster. Jehoiakim was for burning him alive, but he said that they (the Jews) should as captives cook food for the Babylonians and dig canals for the Tigris and Euphrates. The historian adds that Nebuchadnezzar hearing of these prophecies came with Astibar, king of the Medes, and captured Jerusalem, removing to Babylon the treasures of the Temple, “except the Ark and the Tables which were in it; these remained with Jeremiah.” On this last point, see § 5 above.

8. In our Lord’s time there are traces of a popular belief that Jeremiah’s work on earth was not yet done, and this was one of the phases of Messianic hope. See Matt. xvi. 14, and compare John i. 21, where “the prophet” is by some thought to have reference to him.

For other prophecies attributed to him, see Note 11.

9. The treatise *De Vitis Prophetarum* (Migne edn. Tom. xliii., p. 421) attributed to St Epiphanius (died A.D. 402) relates as follows (shewing that meanwhile the tradition had grown considerably), “Jeremiah the prophet was of Anathoth, and he was stoned to death by the people at Taphnae in Egypt. And he lies at the site of Pharaoh’s house, for the Egyptians honoured him, having received benefits from him; for asps and...crocodiles were destroying them, and at the prayer of the prophet Jeremiah both the venomous asps were driven from the land, and in like manner the treacherous beasts from the river, and all the faithful to the present day pray at that spot, and taking of the dust cure the bite of asps and put the crocodiles themselves to flight. This prophet gave a sign to the Egyptian priests, saying, that all their idols must be overthrown and all the works of their hands [see note on Jer. xxv. 7] collapse, when there should set foot in Egypt a virgin about to bear a Divine Child [Matt. ii. 14]. And so it was.” Epiphanius adds that the memory of this prophecy is kept up by a ceremony continued to his own time. He continues:—“This prophet before the capture of the temple seized the Ark of the Law with all its contents, and caused it to be swallowed up in a rock, and said to the priests of the people and to the elders who stood by, *The Lord departed from Sinai into the heavens, and He will come again in sacred night. And this shall be the sign of His coming, when all nations bow down before wood* (the Cross, see Matt. xxiv. 14). And he said to them, *No one of the priests or prophets shall disclose this Ark, save Moses the chosen of God. The Tables that are in it none shall*

open save Aaron. And in the Resurrection the Ark shall rise first, and shall go forth from the rock and be placed on the Mount Sinai, and all the saints shall be gathered together to it, there awaiting the Lord, and shunning the enemy who desires to destroy them. And with his finger he impressed upon the rock the name of the Lord, and the impression was as though it had been cut with an iron tool, and a cloud overshadowed the rock, and no one knows that spot till the end of the world. And this rock is in the wilderness, where the Ark was first made, between the two mountains where Moses and Aaron lie. And at night a cloud like fire rests upon the spot, after the likeness of those of olden time, inasmuch as the glory of God will never desert His Law."

NOTE II.

PROPHECIES ASCRIBED ELSEWHERE TO JEREMIAH.

1. The reference to Jeremiah in 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21 may be direct to the passages xxv. 11, xxix. 10, as we now have them. It has been suggested, however, that it is taken from an early Jewish Commentary (Midrash) and that the same account is to be given of 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22 f. (= Ezra. i. 1 f.), where the nearest parallel in the Canonical Books is Is. xlv. 28. The prophecies of Jeremiah were evidently included in a definite collection of sacred Books when the Book of Daniel was composed. See Dan. ix. 2, which shews that Jer. xxv. 12 and xxix. 10 were in the writer's mind.

2. The 6th chapter of the (Apocryphal) Book of Baruch purports to be an Epistle from Jeremiah to the captives in Babylon.

3. A quotation (really found in Zech. xi. 12, 13) is attributed to "Jeremiah the Prophet" in Matt. xxvii. 9. Lightfoot (*Horae Hebraicae*) on this N. T. passage quotes a Talmudic treatise (*Baba Bathra*, fol. 14 a) which makes the order of O. T. Books Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, giving as the reason, that since the Books of Kings end with disaster, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel also deal with disaster, while Isaiah contains comfort, the former class should go together. Lightfoot accordingly explains the passage on this principle, and takes "Jeremiah" to denote the whole section of which it was the opening Book; comparing Luke xxiv. 44, where by "the psalms" are denoted all the Books not included under the two other divisions there mentioned. Plummer (*Comm. on Matt. l.c.*) suggests that the quotation as from Jeremiah may be influenced by Jer. xviii. 2 and xix. 1, 11. See his note for other suggested explanations.

4. Justin Martyr (*Dialogue with Trypho*, Migne edn., Tom. vi. p. 646) ascribes evidently by mistake to Jeremiah a passage resembling 1 Pet. iii. 19.

5. Eph. v. 14, "Awake, thou that, etc." Grotius in his commentary on this passage remarks that certain (among whom he mentions, apparently by error, St Epiphanius) say that this is from the Apocryphal writings of Jeremiah. He adds that at any rate the word "Christ" does not agree with such a view.

6. In the works of Pseudo Abdias (about the latter part of the 6th century A.D.) these words (see Fabricius, *Codex Pseudepigr.* V. T. p. 1109) are quoted as Jeremiah's: "Behold thy redeemer shall come, Jerusalem, and this shall be his token, He shall open the eyes of the blind, he shall restore to the deaf their hearing, and with his voice shall raise the dead."

7. Other portions of Scripture which have been at one time or another ascribed to Jeremiah are Deuteronomy, Kings, many of the Psalms, e.g. v., vi., xiv., xxii., xxxi., xli., lii—lv., lxix—lxxi.; Isaiah, chs. xlix.—lxvi.; Zechariah, chs. ix.—xiv.

NOTE III.

JEREMIAH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST.

St Jerome (*Commentary on Jer. xxiii.* 9) speaks of this prophet as one who (i) as leading a single life, (ii) as a prophet, (iii) as sanctified from the womb (compare Luke i. 15) and (iv) in his very name, *the Lord's exalted one*, prefigured Christ. To state the parallel more fully in the words of a modern writer: "In both there is the same early manifestation of the consciousness of a Divine mission (Luke ii. 49). The persecution which drove the prophet from Anathoth has its counterpart in that of the men of Nazareth (Luke iv. 29). His protests against the priests and prophets are the forerunners of the woes against the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. xxiii.). His lamentations over the coming miseries of his country answer to the tears that were shed over the Holy City by the Son of Man. His sufferings come nearest, of those of the whole army of martyrs, to those of the Teacher against Whom princes and priests and elders and people were gathered together. He saw more clearly than others that New Covenant, with all its gifts of spiritual life and power, which was proclaimed and ratified in the death upon the cross." (Plumptre, *Art. Jeremiah, Smith's Dict. of Bible.*)

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** * Italics are used in modern names of places, the less familiar foreign words, and in cases where words or phrases, or particular senses of them there noted, are wholly or partially obsolete.*

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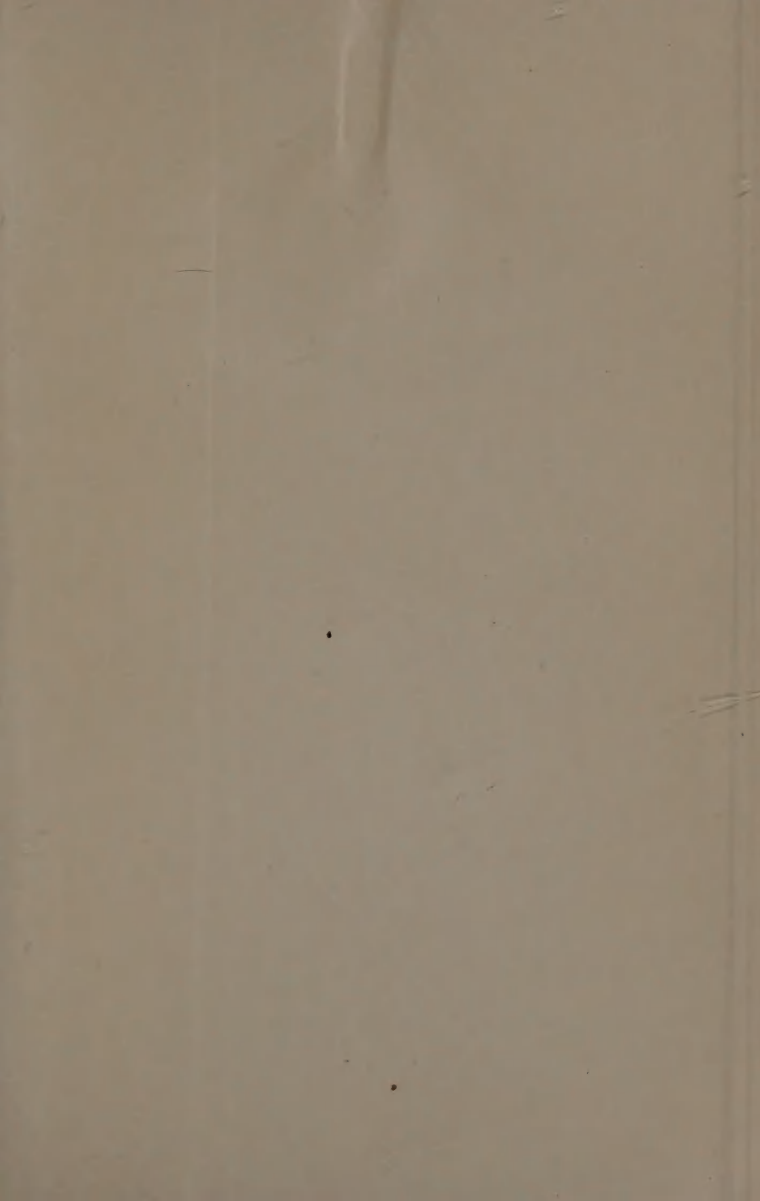
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